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PERUVIAN LETTERS,

INCLUDING

THE LETTERS OF AZA.

FROM THE FRENCH

OF

MADAME DE GRAFIGNY.

TRANSLATED BY

R. L. WHITEHEAD, ESQ.

BARRISTER AT LAW, OF THE HONOURABLE SOCIETY,
INNER TEMPLE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

Quis talia fando
Temperet à lachrymis? VIRG. ÆN.

VOL. I.

London :

Printed by T. Jones, Chapel-Street, Sebo,

FOR THE TRANSLATOR ;

And published by HATCHARD, Bookseller to her Majesty, 190,
Piccadilly ; BELL, 148, Oxford-street ; OSTELL, 3,
Ave-Maria-Lane ; JULIEN & Co. Scho-square ;
and THOMSON & SON, Manchester.

1805.



TO HER GRACE
THE DUCHESS OF ST. ALBANS,
AS AN HUMBLE TRIBUTE
TO
THOSE VIRTUES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS,
THAT DIGNIFY AND ADORN HER
EXALTED RANK,
THIS TRANSLATION,
IS,
BY THE HONOUR OF HER GRACE'S PERMISSION,
RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,
BY HER GRACE'S
MOST OBEDIENT AND DEVOTED
SERVANT,
THE TRANSLATOR.



ADVERTISEMENT.

SOME apology may perhaps be expected for obtruding upon the public a new translation of these celebrated letters. By those, however, who are acquainted with the spirit and beauties of the original, and whom interest or curiosity has excited to compare the merits of the former translation, little will be required. To say nothing of its language or fidelity, it is exclusively so imperfect, that although the letters of Zilia are multiplied to the number of forty-five, several of the principal, and most interesting, are entirely omitted. The whole are for the first time comprized in the present edition.

I have used my best endeavours to restore the spirit and fidelity of the original, and to clothe it in such language, as, I hope, may at least be read without disgust. For the attempt alone I claim the candour and protection of the public.

It is greatly to be lamented, that an English version of so singular, and elegant a little work, has not been anticipated by abler hands ; a work, which for the beauty of its images, the dignity of its sentiments, and the excellence of its moral, stands perhaps unrivalled in the history of foreign literature.

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My dear friend,
I have just received your letter of the 10th inst. and am
glad to hear from you. I am well and hope this
letter finds you the same. I have not much news
to write at present. I am still in the same place
and doing the same work. I hope to hear from you
again soon.

Yours truly,
John Smith

P.S. I have not yet received your letter of the 15th inst.
I am sorry about that. I will try to find it for you.
I am sure you will be glad to hear from me again.

I am, my dear friend,
Very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
John Smith

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THE LIFE
OF
MADAME DE GRAFIGNY.

MADAME DE GRAFIGNY was born in Lorraine, and died at Paris the 12th of December, 1758, in the sixty-fourth year of her age. She was called Frances d'Happoncourt, and was the only daughter of Francis Henry d'Issembourg, lord of Happoncourt, Greux, &c. lieutenant of the light-horse, major of the guards to his royal highness Leopold I. duke of Lorraine, and gover-

nor of Boulay and la Sarre. Her mother was Margaret de Seaureau, daughter of Anthony de Seaureau, baron of Houdemon and Vandœuvre, and first steward of the household to duke Leopold. Madame de Grafigny's father, who was descended from the ancient and illustrious house of Issembourg in Germany, in the early part of his life served in the French army. He was aid-de-camp to marshal Boufflers at the siege of Namur. Lewis XIV. as a recompense for his services, promoted him to the same rank in France which he held in Germany, and confirmed all his titles. From that time he attached himself to the court of Lorraine.

His daughter married Francis Huguet de Grafigny, an exempt of the life-guards, and chamberlain to the duke

duke of Lorraine. She suffered a great deal from the ill treatment of her husband, and, after many years of heroic patience, was legally separated from him. She had several children by him, who all died young before their father.

Madame de Graigny was of a grave disposition. Her conversation did not display those extraordinary talents which she had received from nature. A solid judgement, a heart tender and beneficent, a deportment affable, uniform, and ingenuous, had won her many friends, long before she dreamt of gaining literary admirers.

Mademoiselle de Guise, coming to Paris to celebrate her nuptials with the duke de Richelieu, brought Madame de Graigny with her : and but for this circumstance she had probably

never visited that city ; at least her situation in life gave her little or no encouragement to expect it. She was, moreover, as ignorant as her friends of the reputation which awaited her in that capital. Several persons of wit, composing a society of which she became a member, required her to furnish something for their *Recueil*, a duodecimo volume printed in 1745. The piece she gave them was the most celebrated in that collection. It is entitled : *Nouvelle Espagnole ; le mauvais exemple produit autant de vertus que de vices.* (*A Spanish novel ; bad examples produce as many virtues as vices.*) The title itself, as appears, is a maxim, and the work is full of them. This little piece was not much relished by some of the associates. Madame de Graſigny, nettled at the railleries of these

these gentlemen about her Spanish novel, without saying any thing to the society, composed the *Peruvian Letters*, which had a most astonishing success. A short time after, she presented to the French theatre *Cénie*, a play in five acts in prose, which was received with unbounded applause. It is one of the best pieces we have of the sentimental kind.

La fille d'Aristide, another play in prose, was less fortunate in its success. It was published after the decease of Madame de Graigny, who, they say, corrected the last proof on the very day of her death. It is likewise asserted, that the ill reception of this piece upon the stage did not a little contribute to the disorder of which she died. Madame de Graigny possessed that laudable self-love, the fa-

ther of all talents. A critique, an epigram even, gave her great uneasiness, and she candidly confessed it.

She composed, besides, two pieces* in one act, which were performed at Vienna by the emperor's children. The subjects are of a simple and moral cast, adapted to the age of the illustrious characters for whose instruction they were designed.

Their majesties the emperor and empress, queen of Hungary and Bohemia, honoured our author with a particular esteem, and made her several presents†; as did also their royal highnesses prince Charles, and princess Charlotte of Lorraine, who condescended

**Ziman* and *Zenise*, in prose. *Phaza*, also in one act.

† The emperor Francis I. gave Madame de Graigny a considerable pension.

descended even to hold with her an epistolatory correspondence.

Madame de Graigny left her books to the late M. Guymond de la Touche, author of the modern tragedy of *Iphigénie en Tauride*, and *l'Epître à l'amitié*. He enjoyed this legacy only a year. She left all her papers to a man of letters, who had been her friend for thirty years, with the liberty of disposing of them as he thought proper.

The genius of Madame de Graigny may be collected from her writings, which are in the hands of every one. Her worth may be gathered from her friends : of these she had none but the estimable and the virtuous ; and their regret is her eulogy. A refined sensibility, an unexampled benevolence, constituted the leading features of her character. She did all the good that her

circumstances would admit of. Very few particulars of her life have reached us ; for, with all that unaffectedness and modesty, invariably associated with a mind truly great, she never spoke of herself, and her actions were free from ostentation. One melancholy truth has, at least, been handed down to us, that her whole life was an uninterrupted series of misfortunes. It is indeed to those misfortunes we are partly indebted for that beautiful and sublime philosophy of the heart, which characterizes her works, and will render them immortal.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

TO THE

PERUVIAN LETTERS.

—→●←—

THERE is no people, the knowledge of whose origin and antiquities is so confined as that of the Peruvians. Their annals scarcely contain the history of four centuries.

Mancocapac, according to the tradition of these people, was their law-giver and their first *Inca*. The Sun (said he) whom they called their father, and worshipped as their God, commiserating the savage state in which they had for a long time lived, sent down from heaven two of his children,

a son and a daughter, in order to give them laws, and excite them by building cities, and cultivating the earth, to become reasonable beings.

It was therefore to *Mancocapac* and his wife *Coya-Mama-Oello-Huaco*, that the Peruvians were indebted for those principles, customs, and arts, which made them a happy people ; till avarice, from the bosom of a world they had never so much as dreamt of, cast tyrants upon their shores, whose barbarity was a disgrace to human nature, and entailed an eternal curse upon that age.

The Spaniards could not have made their descent at a season and under circumstances more unfavourable to the Peruvians. A report had for some time obtained of an ancient oracle, which declared, that, *after a certain succession of kings, an extraordinary race of men, whose like had been never seen, would invade their territories*

tories, usurp their government, and destroy their religion.

Although astronomy was one of the chief sciences of the Peruvians, they were no less alarmed at prodigies than other people. Three circles which they discovered round the moon, and especially the appearance of certain comets, struck terror amongst them. An eagle, pursued by other birds, the sea overflowing its bounds, all indeed concurred to render the oracle as infallible as it was fatal.

The eldest son of the seventh *Inca*, whose name, in the Peruvian tongue, foreboded the fatality of his epoch,* had formerly seen a figure very different from that of the Peruvians. A long beard, a robe that covered the spectre down to the feet, a strange animal which he led by a cord, all
terrified

* He was called *Yahuarhuoca*, which literally signifies *weep-blood*.

terrified the young prince, whom the phantom told, that he was an offspring of the Sun, brother to *Mancocapac*, and that his name was *Viracocha*. This ridiculous story was unfortunately preserved among the Peruvians; and when they saw the Spaniards with large beards, their limbs covered, and mounted upon beasts, whose species was quite unknown to them, they took them for the children of that *Viracocha*, who called himself the offspring of the Sun: and hence it arose, that the usurper assumed, by means of the ambassadors he sent them, the title of descendant from the god they adored.

All fell submissive at their feet. The mass of the people is every where the same. The Spaniards were almost universally looked upon as gods, whose wrath could not be appeased by the most valuable gifts, or the most servile homage.

The

The Peruvians, observing the horses of the Spaniards champ their bits, imagined that those tame animals, which shared their respect, and perhaps their worship, fed upon metals. They fetched them every day all the gold and silver they possessed, and crouded about them with these offerings. We mention this circumstance merely to shew the credulity of the Peruvians, and the facility with which the Spaniards were enabled to subdue them.

Whatever homage the Peruvians might render their tyrants, they had too incautiously exposed their immense riches to expect any pity.

A whole people, subjugated and suing for mercy, was put to the sword. Violating thus all the laws of humanity, the Spaniards became absolute masters of the treasures of one of the finest parts of the globe. *Mechaniques victoires !* exclaims Montagne, (alluding to the vile object of these conquests) *Jamais l'ambition,* adds
 he,

he, jamais les inimitiés publiques ne poussèrent les hommes les uns contre les autres à de si horribles hostilités, ou calamités si misérables.

Thus fell the Peruvians the wretched victims to an avaricious people, who, at first, manifested towards them sincerity and even affection.

The ignorance of our vices, and the simplicity of their own manners, betrayed them into the snares of a base enemy. In vain did immense tracts divide our hemisphere from the cities of the Sun: they became a prey to the rapacity of the invaders, and constituted the most valuable part of their domain.

What a sight for the Spaniards were the gardens of the Temple of the Sun, where the trees, fruits, and flowers, were of gold wrought with an art unrivalled in Europe! The walls of the Temple that were lined with the same metal, an infinite number of statues covered with precious stones, and

a quantity of other treasures, till then unknown, dazzled the conquerors of that devoted people. In giving a free loose to their cruelties, they forgot that the Peruvians were men.

An analysis of the manners of these unfortunate people, equally concise with that which we have just given of their calamities, shall conclude the introduction that was thought necessary to the following letters.

The Peruvians, in general, were open and humane. Their extreme attachment to their religion made them rigid observers of the laws, which they regarded as the work of *Mancocapac*, the son of that luminary they adored. Although the Sun was the only God to whom they erected temples, yet they acknowledged a God the Creator superior to him, and whom they called *Pachacamac*. This was with them the *great name*, which was seldom pronounced, and never without marks of the most profound adoration. They had also a great
veneration

veneration for the moon, whom they considered as the wife and sister of the Sun, and the mother of all things : and yet they believed, like the rest of the Indians, that she would occasion, by falling upon the earth, the annihilation of the world. Thunder, (which they called *Yalpor*,) lightening, and the thunderbolt, passed amongst them as ministers of justice to the Sun ; and this idea contributed not a little to that holy respect, with which they were inspired at the sight of the first Spaniards, whose fire-arms they took for instruments of thunder.

The opinion of the immortality of the soul was established among the Peruvians. They believed, like most of the Indians, that the soul went into unknown places, to be there punished or rewarded according to its deserts. Their offerings to the Sun consisted in gold, and every thing that was most valuable. The *Raymi* was the chief festival of that deity, to whom they presented
in

in a cup a certain strong liquor, called *Mays*, which the Peruvians extracted from one of their plants, and which they drank of, even to intoxication, after the sacrifices.

There were a hundred gates in the magnificent Temple of the Sun. The reigning *Inca*, whom they called the *Capa-Inca*, had alone the right of opening them. To him also belonged the exclusive privilege of entering the interior of the Temple.

The Virgins, consecrated to the Sun, were brought up in the Temple, almost from their infancy, and observed a perpetual chastity under the care of their *Mamas*, or governantes; unless when the laws required them to espouse the *Incas*, who were always to marry their own sisters, or, if they had none, the first princess of the blood, that was a Virgin of the Sun. One of the principal occupations of these Virgins was to work the diadems for the *Incas*, of which a kind of fringe composed the whole ornament.

The

The Temple was adorned with the different idols of nations conquered by the *Incas*, and forced to embrace the worship of the Sun. The richness of the metals and precious stones, with which it was embellished, gave it a magnificence and a lustre, worthy of the God whom they adored.

The obedience and respect, which the Peruvians paid their monarchs, arose from an opinion, that the Sun was their father : but their fidelity and affection for them was the fruit of their own virtue, and the equitable administration of the *Incas*.

They educated the youth with all that care, which the happy simplicity of their morals required. The duty of subordination was observed by them with chearfulness, because its necessity was early inculcated, and tyranny and pride had no share in it. Modesty and mutual benevolence were the first principles of their education. Their preceptors, careful to correct each error in its infancy, either repressed a growing passion,

passion, or directed it to the good of society. There are some virtues which necessarily embrace many others. To give an idea of those of the Peruvians, suffice it to remark, that before the invasion of the Spaniards it currently obtained, that no Peruvian was ever known to utter a falsehood.

The *Amautas* (philosophers of that people) taught the youth the discoveries they made in the sciences. The nation was as yet in its infancy with respect to them, but had arrived at its maturity in happiness.

Although the Peruvians were a people less enlightened than ours, and possessed fewer arts, they had sufficient to supply every want. The *Quapas*, or *Quipos*,* served them instead of our writing. Strings of cotton or gut, joined to other strings of different colours, reminded them, by means of knots placed at certain distances, of things.

* The *Quipos* of Peru were also in use among several nations of South America.

things which they wished to recollect. These composed their annals, codes, rituals, &c. They had public officers, called *Quipocamayos*, to whose care the *Quipos* were entrusted. The finances, the accounts, the tributes, all matters, all combinations, were as easily regulated by the *Quipos*, as they could have been by writing.

The sage law-giver of Peru, *Mancocapac*, ordained the tilling of the earth to be held sacred. It was cultivated in common, and the days appointed for that purpose, were days of rejoicing. Canals of a vast extent every where diffused freshness and fertility. But what is scarcely conceivable, the Peruvians, without any instrument of iron or steel, and by the mere strength of their own arm, could overturn rocks, and penetrate the highest mountains, in order to carry their superb aqueducts or highways into every part of their territories.

The Peruvians knew as much of geometry as was necessary to measure and divide
their

their lands. Physic was a science totally unknown to them, although they had some secrets which they resorted to in particular cases. *Garcilasso* observes, that they had a sort of music, and even some kind of poetry. Their poets, whom they called *Hasavec*, composed a species of tragedies and comedies, which the children of the *Caciques*,* or the *Curacas*,† represented during the festivals in the presence of the *Incas* and the whole court.

Ethics, and the knowledge of the laws necessary to the welfare of society, were the only sciences which the Peruvians attained to with any success. It must be allowed, says an historian,§ that they performed

* A sort of governors of provinces.

† Sovereigns of a small territory. They never appeared before the *Incas* and the queens, without offering them a tribute of the curiosities peculiar to the province where they commanded.

§ Puffendorf. Introduction to history.

formed wonders, and established such an admirable system of polity, that few nations will be found, who can boast of having excelled them in this particular.



LETTER I.

AZA, my dearest *Aza* ; the cries of thy tender *Zilia*, like a morning vapour, are exhaled and dissipated ere they reach thee. In vain I call thee to my succour ; in vain I wait thy coming to break the chains of my slavery : Alas ! perhaps I am yet ignorant of the worst — perhaps thy sufferings exceed my own.

The city of the Sun, abandoned to the fury of a barbarous nation, should bathe my cheeks with never-ceasing tears ; and lo ! my grief, my apprehensions, my despair, are for thee only.

What didst thou do, dear soul of my life, in that frightful tumult ? Was thy valour fatal,

or useless to thee? Cruel alternative! bitter anxiety! May but thy days be happily preserved, and let me sink, if it must be so, under the ills that oppress me!

Ever since that dreadful moment, (which ought to have been torn from the chain of time, and reabsorbed in the eternal mind) ever since that moment of horror, wherein these impious savages bore me away from the worship of the Sun, from myself, from thy love, fettered and imprisoned, deprived of all communication with our citizens, ignorant of the language of these ferocious men, I have experienced only the effects of adversity, without even the means of discovering the cause. Plunged in an abyss of darkness, my days resemble the most dismal nights.

Far from being touched with my complaints, my ravishers are inexorable even to my tears; deaf equally to my words, and the cries of my affliction.

Where is that people so barbarous to be found, whose bosoms are callous to the signs of woe? What inhospitable desert ever gave birth to beings insensible to the voice of bleeding

ing

ing nature? Inhuman masters of the *Yalpor* !* tyrannical in the exercise of their power, triumphing in the means of extermination, cruelty alone is the impulse of their actions. How wilt thou, *Aza*, escape their fury? Where art thou? What art thou doing? If my life be dear to thee, inform me of thy lot. Alas! how changed is mine!

Whence is it that days, so like in themselves, should manifest to us such a melancholy difference? Time rolls on in its unvaried course; darkness succeeds to light; every thing in nature appears uniform, harmonious: while I, wretched I, am fallen from a state of supreme bliss into the gloom of despondency, and denied even an interval to prepare me for the frightful transition.

Thou knowest, O delight of my heart! that dreadful day, that day for ever horrible, was to have shone on the triumph of our union. Scarce had it dawned, when eager to perform what my fondness had inspired during the

c 2

night

* Name of thunder. In allusion to the fire arms of the Spaniards.

night, I ran to my *Quipos*,* and availing myself of the silence that still reigned throughout the Temple, hastened to knot them, in the hope, with their assistance, to immortalize the history of our love and our felicity. As I advanced in my work, the undertaking appeared to me less difficult; till, by degrees, this immense clew of threads became under my fingers a faithful representation of our sentiments and actions, as it was formerly the interpreter of our thoughts during long intervals of absence. Wholly taken up with my employment, I forgot the time, when a confused noise roused my spirits, and made my heart leap within me. I thought the happy moment was arrived, and that the hundred gates† were now opening to yield a free passage to the Sun of my days. I hastily hid my *Quipos*, under a lappet of my robe, and

* A great number of little strings of different colours, which the Indians used instead of writing, to reckon the pay of the troops, and the number of people. Some authors assert, that they likewise served to transmit to posterity the memorable actions of their *Incas*.

† In the Temple of the Sun there were a hundred gates, which the *Inca* alone had the power of opening;

and flew to meet thee. But oh! what a scene of horror and desolation presented itself before me! Never, no never, will the dreadful idea be obliterated from my mind.

The floors of the Temple besmeared with blood; the image of the Sun trampled under foot; terrific soldiers, pursuing our frightened virgins, and massacreing all who opposed their passage; our *Mamas*,* expiring under their blows, and whose garments were yet blazing with the fire of their thunder; the shrieks of dismay; the cries for mercy; loud bursts of rage, spreading on every side terror and consternation, took away my senses. On coming to myself, I found, that by a natural and almost involuntary motion, I had got behind, and was clinging to the altar. There as I stood, petrified with horror, I presently observed the barbarians pass by; while the fear of being discovered suspended my respiration. I perceived, however, that the effects of their cruelty abated at the sight of the costly ornaments which overspread the Temple; that they seized upon

c 3

those

* A kind of governautes to the Virgins of the Sun.

those whose lustre most attracted them ; and that they even tore off the plates of gold which lined the walls: I now concluded that plunder was the motive of their barbarity, and hoped, by forbearing to interfere, to escape their violence. I determined in my mind to quit the temple, to get conducted to thy palace, to beg the aid of the *Capa Inca*,* and solicit an asylum for my companions and me: but no sooner, alas ! did I attempt to stir, than their hands were upon me. Oh ! my dear *Aza*, I shudder even yet: yes, these profane monsters dared to lay their sacrilegious hands upon the daughter of the Sun.

Torn from the sacred abode, dragged ignominiously out of the Temple, I beheld, for the first time, the threshold of that celestial gate, which I ought not to have passed without the ensigns of royalty.* Instead of flowers, that should have been strewed under my feet, and songs of gratulation resounding in my ears, the
ways

* The general name of the reigning *Incas*.

† The virgins, consecrated to the Sun, entered into the Temple soon after they were born, and never came out till the day of their marriage.

ways were all covered with carnage and with blood; while the lamentable moans of victims yet convulsed in the agonies of death, assailed me on all sides. Instead of the honours of a throne I should be sharing with thee, a slave of tyranny, shut up in a gloomy dungeon, the space I occupy in the universe is bounded by the extent of my being. A mat, bathed with tears, receives my wretched body, exhausted by the anguish of my soul. But, dear support of my life, how light would all these evils be to me, could I but learn that thou still breathest !

In the midst of this horrible confusion, I know not by what happy chance I saved my *Quipos*. Yes, my dear *Aza*, I have them. They are at present the only treasure of my heart, as they will serve to interpret both thy love and mine. The same knots that shall apprise thee of my existence, by assuming a change of form under thy hands, will likewise acquaint me with thy lot. Alas ! by what way can I convey them to thee ? By what contrivance can they be afterwards returned to me ? I am yet ignorant ; but the same sentiment, that inspired us with their

use, will suggest to us the means of deceiving our tyrants. Hourly shall I envy the happiness of that trusty *Chaqui*,* who is destined to be the bearer of this inestimable relick. He will see thee, my dear *Aza*! I would give all the days allotted me by the Sun to enjoy one moment of thy presence. He will see thee, my dear *Aza*! the sound of thy voice will strike his soul with awe and respect; mine it would fill with comfort and delight. He will see thee, certain that thou breathest, and bless as he gazes, the days of thy life, while, racked with suspense, my impatience for his return will consume my very soul. Oh, my dear *Aza*; every torment that can afflict the tenderest of hearts is concentrated in mine. One sight of thee would dissipate them all. My life for that happy moment.

* Messenger.

LETTER II.

MAY the tree of virtue, my dear Aza, for ever spread its shade over the family of that pious citizen, who received under my window the mysterious tissue of my thoughts, and delivered it into thy hands! May *Pachacamac** prolong his years as a reward for his ingenuity, in conveying to me divine transports with thy answer! The treasures of love are open to me, from whence I derive an exquisite delight, that inebriates my soul. As I unravel the secrets of thy heart, my own is bathed in a sea of perfumes.

c 5

Thou

* The God Creator, more powerful than the Sun.

Thou livest ! and the bonds that ought to have united us are not broken. So much happiness was the object of my desires ; I dared not hope it. Regardless of myself, I was alarmed only for thy days. Thou livest ! my misfortunes are at an end : thou lovest me ! and pleasure that was vanished reassumes my breast. I taste with rapture the delicious confidence of pleasing him I love ; yet I am not unmindful, that to thee I owe all thou vouchsafest to approve in me : as the rose is indebted to the rays of the Sun for the brightness of its colour, so what charms thou mayst find in my sentiments and understanding, are only emanations from thy enlightened mind : nothing is my own but my tenderness.

Hadst thou been like other men, I might have continued in that darkness which my sex is condemned to ; but thy soul, superior to vulgar prejudices ; thy soul, greatly disclaiming the distinctions of custom, prostrated its barriers, in order to exalt me to thy own importance. Thou couldst not suffer a being like thy own to be confined to the humiliating advantage of merely giving life to thy posterity. It was thy pleasure,
that

that our divine *Amautas** should adorn my mind with their sublime philosophy. Yet, Oh light of my life! without the desire of pleasing thee, could I have reconciled myself to quit my careless ignorance for the laborious pursuit of science? Without the desire of meriting thy esteem, thy confidence, thy respect, by cultivating virtues that strengthen love, and which love renders exquisite, I had been only an object for thine eyes; absence had already effaced me from thy remembrance.

But, alas! if thou still lovest me, why am I in bondage? As oft as I cast a look on the walls of my prison, my joy disappears, horror seizes me again, and all my apprehensions are renewed. They have not robbed thee of thy liberty, yet thou comest not to my succour; thou art apprized of my situation, and it is not changed. No, my dear *Aza*, thy *Zilia* tells thee, that thou art not so free among these barbarous people (whom thou callest Spaniards) as thy ingenuous, unsuspecting soul leads thee to imagine. I see as strong marks of slavery in the

c 6

honours

* Indian philosophers.

honours that they pay thee, as in the chains of my own captivity:

Thy goodness deceives thee; thou believest sincere the promises these barbarians make thee by their interpreter, because thy own words are inviolable; but I, who understand not their language, I, whom they think not worthy to be duped, observe their actions. Thy subjects take them for Gods, and join their party. Oh! my dear *Aza*, woe to the people whom fear controls! Open thine eyes before it is too late. Guard against the treacherous kindness of these foreigners. Give up thy empire; *Viracocha*, thou knowest, foretold its destruction. Purchase thy life and thy liberty, at the price of thy power, thy magnificence, and thy treasures; the gifts of nature will alone be left thee, and the remainder of our days shall pass in safety.

Rich in the reciprocal possession of our hearts, great by our virtues, powerful by our moderation, we will retire into a cot, and there enjoy heaven, and earth, and mutual endearments. Thou wilt be more a king, enthroned in the faithful soul of thy *Zilia*, than ruling over an infinite, adulatory people. In my submission to thy
will

will thou shalt enjoy, without tyranny, the proud right of commanding. Cheerful in my obedience, thy empire shall resound with my songs of gladness : thy diadem* shall be always the work of my hands : thou shalt lose nothing of royalty but the cares and the fatigues.

How often, dear soul of my life, hast thou lamented the duties of thy rank ! How oft have the ceremonies, which attended thy visits, made thee envy the humble condition of thy subjects ! Thy wish was then to live for my sake only ; dost thou now hesitate to rid thee of so many restraints ? Am I no more that *Zilia*, whom thou wouldst once have preferred to thy empire ? I will not, I cannot believe it. My heart is not altered ; why should there be a change in thine ? Yes, I love, I see that same *Aza* for ever before me, who reigned in my soul the first moment I beheld him. Oft do I recal the pleasing remembrance of that happy day, when thy father, my sovereign lord, gave thee for the first time to partake the privilege, reserved to him only

* The diadem of the *Incas* was a kind of fringe, worked by the Virgins of the Sun.

only, of entering the inner part of the Temple.* I-picture to myself the captivating sight of our Virgins, assembled on that memorable occasion, whose charms derived an additional grace from the agreeable order in which they stood : as, in a garden, an harmonious disposition of the brightest flowers gives them a new lustre. Thy amiable form appeared in the midst of us like a rising Sun, whose dawning light promises the serenity of a fine day. The animation of thine eyes covered our cheeks with the blushes of modesty, while our looks were held captive in manifest confusion : a gleam of admiration sparkled in thy own ; for never had they met before an assemblage of so many beauties. The *Capa Inca* was, till then, the only man we had ever seen. All was astonishment and silence. I know not what were the thoughts of my companions ; but ah ! what emotions assailed the heart of *Zilia* ! I experienced, for the first time in my life, a certain sensation of pain and anxiety, mixed with pleasure. Confused with the agitations of my soul, I was
going

*The reigning *Inca* had the exclusive right of entering the Temple.

going to steal from thy sight; but thy steps were turned towards me; respect detained mine. O *Aza*! the remembrance of this dawn of my happiness will ever be dear to me. The sound of thy voice, like the melodious chanting of our hymns, excited in my veins that gentle trepidation, that religious awe, which is inspired by the presence of the Divinity. Trembling and confounded, my timidity deprived me for a while of utterance. Encouraged, at last, by the sweetness of thy words, I ventured to lift up my eyes towards thee; I met thine. No, death itself shall never efface from my memory the tender tumults of our souls, that met and were blended in an instant.

Could we ever, my dear *Aza*, have questioned our original, this glance had dissipated all our doubts. What principle, but that of fire, could have transmitted to us this lively intelligence of hearts, communicated, diffused, and felt, with indescribable rapidity?

I was too ignorant of the effects of love not to be deceived by it. My imagination, fraught with the sublime theology of our *Cucipatas*,* I took the fire that animated my being for a divine

* Priests of the Sun.

vine agitation. I thought the Sun had delegated thee to reveal his will to me ; that he had chosen me for his spouse elect :* I sighed ; but examining my heart after thy departure, I found in it only the image of my *Aza*. What an alteration did thy presence make in me ! Every object appeared new : I saw, methought, my companions for the first time. How beautiful they looked ! Their society was irksome to me. I retired apart, in order to give vent to the troubles of my soul, when one of them came to divert me from my thoughts, by giving me only fresh reason to indulge them. She informed me, that being thy nearest relation, I was destined to be thy consort, as soon as my age would admit of our union.

I did not understand the laws † of thy empire ; but once having seen thee my heart could not be insensible to the ravishing idea of so much happiness in calling myself thine. Far,
however

* There was one Virgin consecrated to the Sun, who was never to be married.

† The laws of the Indians obliged the *Incas* to marry their sisters ; and when they had none, to take the first princess of the blood of the *Incas* that was a Virgin of the Sun.

however, from knowing the whole extent of it, that accustomed to the sacred appellation of spouse of the Sun, my hopes were confined to the seeing of thee daily, to the worshipping of thee, and offering thee my vows, the same as to him.

It was thou, my dear *Aza*, it was the idol of my soul, that filled up the measure of my bliss by informing me, that the exalted rank of thy wife would make me a partner of thy heart, of thy throne, of thy glory, of thy virtues; that I should incessantly enjoy those discourses, so charming, yet how short in proportion to our wishes! which should adorn my mind with the perfections of thy soul, and add to my happiness the delicious hope of one day contributing to thy felicity.

O, my dear *Aza*! how flattering to my heart was thy tender anxiety on account of my youth, that retarded our marriage! What an age did two years appear in thine eyes, and yet how soon gone! Alas! the happy moment was arrived. What cruel fatality rendered it so bitter? What god thus persecutes innocence

cence and virtue? or what infernal power severed us from each other? Horror seizes me—my heart is burst—my work is drowned with tears—*Aza*—my dear—dear——*Aza*——

LETTER

LETTER III.

IT is thou, dear light of my days, it is thou who callest me back to life. Would I preserve it but for the assurance, that death, at one stroke, would mow down both thy days and mine? The moment was just come, when that spark of divine fire, with which the Sun animates our being, was about to expire. Industrious nature was already preparing to give another form to that portion of matter which belonged to her in me. I was dying. Thou wert losing for ever half of thyself, when my love restored me to life, and which I sacrifice to thee. But
how

how shall I inform thee of the wonderful things that have happened to me? How recal ideas already confused even when I received them, and which the time, that is since passed, renders still less intelligible?

Nosooner, my dear *Aza*, had I committed to our faithful *Chaqui* the last tissue of my thoughts, than I heard a great busile in our dwelling. About the middle of the night, two of my ravishers hurried me away from my gloomy retreat with as much violence, as they had used in dragging me from the Temple of the Sun. I cannot tell thee through what ways they took me. They travelled only by night, and remained all day in some dreary desert, without seeking any shelter: Sinking presently with fatigue, they lifted me on a sort of *Hamac*,* the motion of which tired me nearly as much as if I had walked. At last, arrived, as I conjectured, at our journey's end, one night, these barbarians carried me upon their arms into a house, whose access, notwithstanding it was dark,

* A kind of suspended bed, used by the Indians to carry them from place to place.

dark, appeared to me extremely difficult. I was put into a place more confined and inconvenient than ever I had found my former prison. But, my dear *Aza*, could I make thee believe what I do not comprehend myself, wert thou not assured, that a falsehood never sullied the lips of a child of the Sun? * This house (which I judged to be very large from the number of people it contained) this house, suspended as it were, and not fixed to the ground, kept in a perpetual balance.

O, light of my mind ! *Ticaviracocha* should have filled my soul like thine with his divine wisdom, to enable me to understand this prodigy. All I know of it is, that it was not built by a being friendly to mankind ; for a few minutes after I had entered it, its continual motion, added to an offensive smell, made me so violently sick, that I am surprised I did not sink under it. This was only the beginning of my troubles. A pretty long time now elapsed without my suffering any thing to speak of; till, one morning, I was suddenly awoke
by

* It passed for a fact, that a Peruvian never told a lie.

by a noise more tremendous than that of *Yalpor*. Our habitation felt such shocks as the earth will receive, when the moon shall by her fall reduce the universe to dust.* The cries that accompanied this uproar, made it still more dreadful. My appalled senses conveyed to my soul no other idea than the destruction of all nature. I thought the danger universal: I trembled for thy days. My terror grew at length to the utmost height, on seeing a number of furious men, with faces and clothes besmeared with blood, rush tumultuously into my room. This horrible sight overpowered me: my strength and faculties forsook me. I am yet ignorant of the sequel of this terrible event. On my recovery, I found myself in a tolerably decent bed, surrounded by a great many savages, who were not indeed the barbarous Spaniards, but were equally strange to me.

Canst thou conceive my astonishment, on finding myself in a new dwelling, amongst new men, without the power of accounting for this
extraordinary

* The Indians believed that the end of the world would be occasioned by the falling of the moon upon the earth.

extraordinary change? I quickly shut my eyes, in order that, being more collected within myself, I might be satisfied whether I really existed; or whether my soul had not quitted my body to pass into unknown regions.*

I confess to thee, dear idol of my heart, that weary of a loathsome life, disheartened with sufferings of every description, sinking under the weight of my horrible destiny, I regarded with indifference the dissolution of my being, which was sensibly approaching. I resolutely refused all the nourishment they offered me; and, in a few days, I found myself on the verge of that fatal period, which I anticipated without regret. The wasting of my strength, annihilated my intellects. My enfeebled mind became already susceptible only of images, like a faint design traced by a trembling hand. Objects already, which had most affected me, excited in me only that vague sensation, that we feel in the indulgence of a fluctuating reverie. I was almost no more. This state, my dear

Aza,

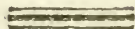
* The Indians believed, that the soul after death went into unknown places, there to be punished or rewarded according to its deserts.

Aza, is not so formidable as it is imagined. It alarms us at a distance, because we contemplate it with all our powers: but when it is arrived, harrassed with the gradations of pain and anxiety which conduct us to it, the decisive moment appears to us only as the moment of repose. I found, however, that the natural bias that leads us during our life to dive into futurity, and even into that which we never shall experience, seems to return with additional force in the hour of dissolution. We cease to live for ourselves: we would fain know how we shall live in the object we love. It was in one of these deliriums of my soul, that I fancied myself transported into the interior of thy palace. I arrived just as they were telling thee the news of my death. My imagination painted in such lively colours what would indeed have happened, that truth itself could not have made on me a more sensible impression. I saw thee, my dear *Aza*, pale, disfigured, deprived of thy senses; like a lily parched by the burning heat of noon. Is love then sometimes cruel? Yes, I triumphed in thy grief: I rejoiced to excite it by sorrowful adieus. I found a sweetness, perhaps

haps a pleasure, in spreading over thy days the poison of regret; and yet, that same love, which made me so barbarous, harrowed up my heart with the horror of thy pains. At last, awakened as out of a profound sleep, pierced with thy own sufferings, trembling for thy life, I called for help; I again beheld the light.

Shall I ever see thee again, dear arbiter of my existence? Alas! who can assure me of it? I know not where I am; perhaps far, very far from thee. But should we be separated by the immense regions inhabited by the children of the Sun, the light cloud of my thoughts shall hover incessantly about thee.

LETTER IV.



WHATEVER, my dear *Aza*, may be the love of life, it is lessened by the troubles and extinguished by despondency. The contempt in which nature seems to hold our being by exposing it to pain, at first, provokes us to rebel; but the mortifying consideration of the impossibility to release ourselves, soon gives us a disgust of our wants and insignificance

I no longer live in or for myself: every instant I breathe is a sacrifice I make to thy love, and which daily becomes more painful. If time mitigates the violence of the malady
that

that consumes me, it serves but to increase the sufferings of my mind. Far from clearing up the mystery of my fate, it appears only to render it still more obscure. Every thing is strange about me; every thing is new: every thing interests my curiosity, and nothing can satisfy it. In vain my attention and endeavours are employed to make myself understood, or to understand others: both are equally impossible. Weary of so many fruitless pains, I thought to dry up the source of them, by depriving my eyes of the impression they received from objects. I persisted some time in keeping them shut. Vain effort! The voluntary darkness to which I condemned myself, served only to relieve my modesty, that was continually offended at the sight of these men, whose services and assistance are so many punishments: but my soul was not less agitated. Absorbed within myself, my inquietudes were only the more lively, and the desire of expressing them became more violent. The impossibility of making myself understood, still spreads a torment over my senses no less insupportable,

than the pain which would have a more apparent reality. Cruel situation !

Alas ! I thought I had already begun to understand a few words of the savage Spaniards. I found in them some resemblance to our own august language, and flattered myself, that in a little time I should be able to explain myself to them. Far from finding the same advantage among my new tyrants, they express themselves with so much rapidity, that I cannot even distinguish the inflections of their voice. Every thing concurs to persuade me, that they are not of the same nation ; and from the difference of their manners and apparent character, one may easily conceive, that *Pachacamac* has distributed to them, with great inequality, the elements of which he formed mankind. The grave and austere air of the former, denotes them to be made of the same matter as the hardest metals. These seem to have slipped through the hands of the Creator, when he had scarcely got together air and fire towards their formation. The disdainful eyes, the gloomy and settled aspect of those, sufficiently shew them to be cruel in cold blood ; and which has
been

been, alas! too fatally confirmed by the inhumanity of their actions. The smiling countenance of these, the sweetness of their looks, a certain impatience that pervades all they do, and which appears to flow spontaneously from the heart, prepossess one in their favour: but the inconsistencies I remark in their conduct, suspend my judgment.

Two of these savages very seldom quit my bed-side. One, whom I judged by the dignity of his appearance to be the *Cacique*,* seems to pay me, in his way, a great deal of respect: the other supplies me with occasional support, as my disorder may require; but his goodness is severe, his assistance cruel, his familiarity assuming.

I no sooner, on my recovery, found myself in their power, than this latter, (for I marked him well) more forward than the rest, would take me by the hand, which I drew back with inexpressible confusion. He seemed surprised at my resistance, and without any regard to decency, took hold of it again. Feeble, dying,

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and

* *Cacique* is a kind of governor of a province.

and uttering only words that were not understood, could I prevent him? He held it, my dear *Aza* as long as he pleased; and I have been obliged, ever since, to give it him myself several times a day, in order to avoid contentions, which invariably terminate to my disadvantage.

This kind of ceremony* appears to me a superstition of these people. I fancied they discovered some connection that it had with my complaint; but its effects are apparently confined to their own nation; for I perceive scarcely any. I suffer continually from an inward fire that consumes me, and have hardly strength enough left to knot my *Quipos*. I employ as much time in this occupation as my weakness will permit me. Those knots, which strike my senses, seem to give more reality to my thoughts. A kind of resemblance, I imagine them to have with words, creates an illusion that beguiles my pain. I fancy myself speaking to thee; telling thee of my love; assuring thee of my vows, and my fidelity. This sweet deception is the
comfort

* The Indians had no knowledge of physic.

comfort of my life. If my work is interrupted by the fulness of my heart, I sigh at thy absence. Thus wholly devoted to my tenderness, there is not one of my moments, that belongs not to thee. Alas! what other use could I make of them? Oh, my dear *Aza*! wert thou not indeed, the sovereign of my soul; although the chains of love did not unite me inseparably to thee; plunged in a dark abyss, could I turn away my thoughts from the light of my life? Thou art the Sun of my days: thou brightenest, thou prolongest them they are thine. Thou cherishest me; I consent to live. What, in return, wilt thou do for me? Thou shalt love me, and I am rewarded.

LETTER V.



WHAT have I suffered, my dear *Aza*, since the last knots I consecrated to thee ! The loss of my *Quipos* was only wanting to complete my misery ; and when my officious persecutors discovered the effect which this work had upon my spirits, they deprived me of the use of them. At last they have restored to me this treasure of my tenderness, but which I redeemed with many tears. This expression of my thoughts was all I had left me ; this melancholy consolation of painting to thee my troubles. Could I lose it, and not despair ?

My

My strange destiny has even robbed me of that comfort the unfortunate find in speaking of their pains. We are apt to believe ourselves pitied when we are heard : an involuntary sympathy glows upon the countenance of those who hear us. Whatever may be the reason, it seems to relieve us. I cannot make myself understood, and am surrounded with gaiety : nay, I cannot enjoy in peace that new kind of solitude, to which I am reduced by the want of communicating my ideas. Beset with officious and troublesome objects, their watchful looks disturb the seclusion of my soul, constrain the movements of my body, and fetter my very thoughts. I frequently forget that happy privilege given us by nature, of rendering our sentiments inaccessible to others, and sometimes fear, that these prying savages suspect the unfavourable reflections with which I am inspired by the extravagance of their conduct. It is my constant and painful study so to compose my thoughts, as if they could absolutely dive into them.

One moment destroys the opinion which another had given me of their character, and

of the light in which they consider me. Not to mention an infinite number of trifling denials, they refuse me, my dear *Aza*, even the necessary sustenance of life, and the liberty of chusing where I would be. They keep me with a sort of violence in that bed, which is become insupportable. Hence I should conclude they regard me as their slave, and that their power is tyrannical. On the other hand, when I reflect on the extreme concern they manifest for the preservation of my days, and the respect which accompanies their services, I am induced to believe, that they take me for a kind of superior being. Not one of them appears before me without bending his body, more or less, as we used to do in worshipping the Sun. The *Cacique* seems to imitate the ceremonies of the *Incas* on the day of *Raymi*.* He kneels down close to my bed-side, and remains a considerable while in that painful posture. Sometimes he observes silence, and, with his eyes fixed on the ground, appears in profound meditation. I
mark

* *Raymi* was the principal feast of the Sun ; the *Inca* and the priests worshipped him on their knees.

mark in his countenance that pious confusion, with which *the great name** inspires us when spoken aloud. If he sees an opportunity of laying hold of my hand, he puts his lips to it with the same veneration that we entertain for the sacred Diadem.† Sometimes he utters a great many words, which bear no resemblance to the ordinary language of his nation: the sound is more soft, more distinct, more harmonious. To this he adds that piteous look, which is the forerunner of tears, those sighs that express the necessities of the soul, those accents which are almost the accents of complaint; in short, all that accompanies the desire of obtaining favours. Alas! my dear *Aza*, if he knew me well, if he were not in some error with regard to my being, what prayer would he have to put up to me?

May not this be an idolatrous people? I have not yet observed them pay any adoration

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to

* The great name was *Pachacamac*, which they pronounced but seldom, and always with great tokens of adoration.

† They kissed the diadem of *Manco-Capac* in the same manner as the Roman Catholics kiss the relics of their Saints.

to the Sun : perhaps they make women the object of their worship.

Before the great *Manco-Capac** brought down to earth the will of the Sun, our ancestors deified whatever struck them with fear or pleasure. Perhaps these savages entertain the same prejudices with respect to women. But if they adored me, would they add to my calamities the hideous constraint in which they keep me? No; they would strive to please me; they would obey the tokens of my will : I should be free, and quit this hateful abode : I should go in search of the master of my soul, one only of whose looks would cancel the remembrance of all my misfortunes.

* The first law-giver of the Indians.

LETTER VI.

AMAZEMENT, my dear *Aza*, amazement most horrible! How are our woes augmented! how pitiable is our lot! our ills are without remedy: it remains for me only to tell them, and to die.

I was at last permitted to get up; when eagerly availing myself of this opportunity, I contrived, by degrees, to reach a small window, which had long been the object of my ardent curiosity. I opened it with haste. What did I see, dear love of my life! I shall not find expressions to paint to thee the excess of my
astonishment

astonishment, and the mortal despair that seized me, on finding myself encompassed by that terrible element, which I shudder even to look on. My first glance did but too well inform me what occasioned the troublesome motion of our dwelling. I am in one of those floating houses, which served to convey the Spaniards to our unhappy country, and of which a very imperfect description had been given me.

Conceive, dearest *Aza*, what dismal ideas rushed into my soul at this frightful discovery. I am certain they are taking me away from thee. I breathe no more the same air : I inhabit no longer the same element. Thou wilt never know where I am ; whether I love thee ; whether I exist. The annihilation even of my being will appear an event of too trifling importance to be communicated to thee. Dear arbiter of my days, of what value to thee hereafter can be the unfortunate life of thy *Zilia* ? Let me resign to my Creator an insupportable boon I wish not to retain : I shall see thee no more ; I wish not to live. In losing him I love, the whole universe is lost to me : it is now
nothing

nothing but a vast desert, which I fill with the cries of my affection. Hear them, dear object of my tenderness; be touched with them; let me die——What error betrays me? No, my dear *Aza*; no, it is not thou who invitest me to live: it is timid nature, that, shuddering with horror, assumes thy voice more powerful than her own, to retard an end which is always dreadful to her:—but it is done—the speediest way shall relieve me from her regrets——

Let the sea swallow up for ever in its waves my unfortunate passion, my life, and my despair. Receive, too unhappy *Aza*, receive the last fond impressions of my heart—it never admitted any but thy image; it wished not to live but for thy sake, and dies full of thy love.—I love thee—I think—I feel it yet—I tell it thee for the last time——

LETTER VII.



AZA, thou hast not lost all. Thou reignest still over one heart: I breathe. The vigilance of my keepers has frustrated my fatal purpose: I have only the shame left of having attempted its execution. I will not relate to thee the particulars of a design, projected and destroyed in the same instant. Could I dare ever lift up my eyes to thee hadst thou been a witness of my frenzy? My faculties, annihilated by despondency, were no longer a relief to me: my life appeared to me of no value; I had forgot thy love,

Oh!

Oh! how cruel is returning reason after a paroxysm of distraction! In what different lights do we consider the same objects! In the horror of despair ferocity is taken for courage, and the dread of suffering for constancy of soul: but, let a word, a look, a surprise, call us back to ourselves, and we find weakness to be alone the true principle of our heroism, repentance the fruit of it, and contempt its reward.

The sense of my guilt is its severest punishment. Abandoned to the bitterness of remorse, buried under the veil of shame, I retire within myself. I fear that my body occupies too much room: I would hide it from the light. My tears flow apace. My grief is calm, and, though wholly given up to it, not even a murmur steals from my lips. What sacrifice is great enough to expiate my crime? it was against thee.

In vain, for the last two days, have these kind savages invited me to partake of the joy that transports them. I cannot conceive the meaning of it; but, were I, indeed, acquainted with it, I should think myself unworthy to mix in their festivity

festivity. Their dancings, their joyous shouts, a red liquor, like *Mays*,* which they drink of abundantly, their anxiousness to contemplate the Sun wherever they can descry him, would persuade me, that these rejoicings were in honor of that divine luminary, were the conduct of the *Cacique* agreeable to that of others. Far, however, from participating in the general felicity, since the fault I committed, he devotes himself entirely to my grief. His zeal is more respectful, his solicitude more lively, his attention more vigilant.

Suspecting that the continual presence of his savages added constraint to my affliction, he has relieved me from the embarrassment of their offensive looks: I have now scarcely any to endure but his own.

Wouldst thou believe it my dear *Aza*, there are moments, wherein I find a pleasure in these mute conversations? The fire of his eyes recalls to my remembrance the image of that
which

* *Mays* is a plant, whereof the Indians make a strong and salutary drink, which they offer to the Sun on the days of his feasts, and of which they drink, even to intoxication, after the sacrifice is over.

which I have seen in thine : I trace in them a likeness that beguiles my heart. Alas ! how transitory the illusion ! how lasting the regrets that succeed it ! They will end only with my life, since I live for thee alone.

LETTER VIII.



WHEN all our thoughts, my dear *Aza*, are concentrated in a single object, circumstances interest us only, in proportion as we find them associated with it. Wert thou not alone the mover of my soul, could I have passed from a state (as I have just done) of the blackest despair, to one of the brightest hope? Several times in vain had the *Cacique* attempted to get me to that window, which I cannot even yet look at without shuddering. Prevailed upon, at last, by repeated solicitations, I suffered him to lead me to it. Ah! my dear *Aza*,
how

how well was I rewarded for my compliance! By an incomprehensible miracle, on looking, as he directed me, through a kind of hollow cane, I was able to descry land at a considerable distance, and which, without the help of this wonderful machine, my eyes could not have reached. At the same time he made me understand by signs, which begin to grow familiar to me, that we were going to that land, and that the sight of it was the sole cause of those rejoicings, which I had mistaken for a sacrifice to the Sun. I immediately became sensible to all the advantage of this pleasing discovery. Hope, like a ray of light, glanced into the bottom of my heart. They are certainly carrying me to this land they have shewn me, and which is evidently a part of thy empire, since the Sun sheds around it his benign influence.† I am no longer in the fetters of the cruel Spaniards: who, then, can prevent my returning under thy laws? Yes, my dear *Aza*, I go to be re-united to the object
of

† The Indians were not acquainted with our hemisphere, and believed that the Sun enlightened only the land of his children.

of my tenderness: my love, my reason, my wishes, all assure me of it. I fly into thy arms: a torrent of joy deluges my soul: the past is vanished: my troubles are at an end; they are forgotten: the future alone occupies my thoughts; it is my only good.

Aza, my dearest hope, I have not lost thee. I shall see thy face, thy robes, thy shadow: I shall love thee; I shall tell it thee with my own lips: is there a suffering, which the anticipation of so much happiness does not efface?

LETTER IX.



HOW long are the days, my dear *Aza*, when we come to reckon them! Time, like space is known only by its limits. Our ideas and our sight are equally lost by the constant uniformity of both. If objects determine the boundaries of space, so do our hopes, it seems to me, those of time; and if they forsake us, or are not very forcibly impressed, we perceive no more the duration of time than the air that fills the expanse. Ever since the fatal moment of our separation, my soul and my heart, alike worn with misfortune, remained buried in that total

tal abstraction, the horror of nature, the image of nothing. The days slipt away without my regarding them: no interest invited my attention to their length: but now hope marks every instant as they pass: their duration appears infinite; and I taste a pleasure in recovering the tranquillity of my mind, in proportion as it restores to me the facility of reflection. Since my imagination has been susceptible of joy, a croud of thoughts that present themselves harass and distract it. Projects of comfort and of happiness alternately succeed each other. New ideas are easily admitted; those, indeed, which made no impression, spontaneously recur to me.

Within these two days I have learned several words of the *Cacique's* language, which were not before familiar to me; but they are merely confined to the names of objects, and neither express my own thoughts, nor enable me to understand those of others. They, however, afford me some necessary information. I know that the *Cacique's* name is *Deterville*; that our floating house is called, *Ship*; and the country we are going to, *France*.

This

This latter at first alarmed me, as I did not remember to have heard any province of thy kingdom so called ; but reflecting on the variety of those that compose it, whose names have escaped me, my fears quickly subsided. Could they, indeed, continue long with that confident hope, which the sight of the Sun incessantly gives me ? No, my dear *Aza* ; that divine star shines only on his children : to doubt it for an instant were criminal. I am about to return into thy empire : I am on the point of seeing thee : I fly to my felicity.

Amidst the transports of my joy, gratitude prepares for me a delicious pleasure. Thou wilt load with honors and with riches that beneficent *Cacique*,* who shall restore us to each other. He shall bear into his province the remembrance of *Zilia* : the reward of his virtue shall render him still more virtuous ; and his happiness shall be thy glory.

Nothing can compare, my dear *Aza*, to the kindness he shews me. Far from treating me

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* The *Caciques* were tributaries to the *Incas*.

as his slave, he seems to be mine. I now experience from him as many courtesies, as I did denials during my illness. Wholly taken up with me, my inquietudes, and amusements, he appears to have no other care. I admit his attentions with somewhat less difficulty, since habit and reflection have convinced me of my error in suspecting him of idolatry. Not but he frequently repeats much the same tokens, which I mistook for worship; but the tone, the look, and the manner he employs, persuade me it is only a national diversion. He begins by making me pronounce distinctly some words in his language. As soon as I have said after him, *Yes, I love you*; or, *I promise to be yours*, joy expands over his countenance; he kisses my hands with rapture, and with an air of briskness, utterly incompatible with the gravity that accompanies divine worship.

Easy as to his religion, I am not quite so with regard to the country, from whence he derives his origin. His language and his dress are so different from ours, that they frequently shake my confidence. Sorrowful reflections sometimes cloud my dearest hope: I pass successively

cessively from fear to joy, and from joy to anxiety. Harassed with the confusion of my thoughts, disheartened by the doubts that torment me, I had resolved to think no more. But what can relax the energies of a soul, deprived of all communication, that acts only on itself, and excited to reflect by such important interests? Impossible, my dear *Aza*. I seek to be informed with an ardour that consumes me, and find myself continually in the most profound ignorance. I am aware, that the privation of one sense may sometimes deceive us; but I observe with surprise, that the use of all mine betrays me from one error into another. May not an acquaintance with tongues be a guide to the soul? Oh! my dear *Aza*, what melancholy truths do my misfortunes discover to me! But away with these dismal thoughts—we are close upon land: the light of my days will dissipate in a moment the darkness that surrounds me.

LETTER X.

I AM at last, my dear *Aza*, arrived at that land I so much wished for, but do not yet meet with any thing that confirms the happiness I had promised myself. Every object that presents itself strikes, astonishes, confounds me, and leaves only on my mind a vague impression, a stupid perplexity, which I care not to dispel. My errors repress my judgment: I remain in uncertainty, and almost doubt of every thing I see.

As soon as we got out of the floating-house, we entered a city built on the sea-shore. The people (who followed us in crouds) appeared to be of the same nation as the *Cacique*; but the
houses,

houses have not the smallest resemblance to those in the cities of the Sun. If ours excel in beauty from the richness of their ornaments, these are far superior for the prodigies they abound in.

On entering the apartment provided me by *Deterville*, my heart leaped within me. I observed, facing the door, a young person, dressed like a Virgin of the Sun. I ran to her with open arms. Conceive, my dear *Aza*, conceive if thou canst my surprise, at finding only an impenetrable resistance, where I beheld a human form move in a very extended space. Astonishment held me motionless, with my eyes fixed upon this shade, when *Deterville* shewed me his own figure by the side of that, which engaged all my attention. I touched him; I spoke to him; I saw him at the same instant very near, and very far from me. These miracles confound reason, and obscure the judgment. What ought we to think of the inhabitants of this country? Ought we to fear, or should we love them? I will be cautious of giving an opinion upon this subject.

The *Cacique* made me understand, that the figure which I saw was my own. But what do I learn by that? Is the wonder less extraordinary? Am I the less mortified to find nothing in my mind but ignorance or error? With pain I remark, my dear *Aza*, the least enlightened of this country are wiser than all our *Amautas*.

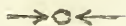
Deterville has given me a young and very sprightly *China*.* It is a great consolation to see again, and to be waited on by one of my own sex. Several others are ready enough to serve me; but I would gladly dispense with their attendance: their presence only revives my apprehensions. From their manner of looking at me, I can easily perceive, they have never been at *Cuzco*.† At present, however, I can judge of nothing: my mind is continually fluctuating in a sea of doubts: my heart, alone unshaken, desires, hopes, and waits for one happiness only, without which life were insupportable.

LETTER

* A female servant, or waiting-woman.

† The capital of Peru.

LETTER XI.



ALTHOUGH, my dear *Aza*, I have taken all the pains in my power to gain some light with respect to my situation, I am no better acquainted with it than I was three days ago. All I have been able to discover is, that the savages of this country appear equal to the *Cacique* in goodness and humanity: They dance and sing, as if they had lands to cultivate every day.* Were I to judge from the opposition of their customs to those of our nation, I could not entertain the smallest hope:

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but

* The lands were cultivated in common at Peru, and the days of this work were days of rejoicing.

but I remember, that thy august father subjected to his obedience very distant provinces, the people of which bore no resemblance to our own. Why may not this be one of them? The Sun seems pleased to enlighten it. He is more beautiful and clear than ever I beheld him. I love to indulge the confidence he inspires, and am only uneasy about the time that must elapse before I can inform myself of every thing, that so nearly involves the interest of our hearts; for, my dear *Aza*, I can have no doubt, but an acquaintance alone with the language of this country will satisfy me of the truth, and put an end to my anxiety. I let slip no opportunity of learning it, and avail myself of every instant, when *Deterville* leaves me at liberty, to take lessons from my *China*. This is, however, but a weak resource; for, not being able to make her understand my thoughts, we can enter into no conversation. The *Cacique's* signs are sometimes more useful to me. Habit has made them a kind of language, which serves us at least to express our wishes. He took me yesterday to a house, where, without the advantage of this expedient, I should have got into disgrace. We
entered

entered a larger and better furnished room than the one I live in. A great number of people were there assembled. The general amazement evinced at my appearance not a little displeased me ; while the excessive laughter, which several young girls endeavoured to stifle, but which was repeated whenever they looked up at me, excited in my breast a painful sensation I should have taken for shame, could my conscience have accused me of any crime : but finding only a great reluctance to remain in their company, I was going to turn back, when a sign from *Deterville* immediately stopped me. It conveyed the impropriety of my leaving the room ; and I took care not to deserve the blame they attached to me without reason. As I fixed all my attention upon these women, I thought I discovered, that the singularity only of my dress occasioned the surprise of some, and the rude diversion of others. I pitied their weakness, and contented myself with proving to them by my countenance, that my soul differed not so much from theirs, as my clothes did from their finery

A man (whom I should have taken for a *Curacas*,* if he had not been dressed in black) laid hold of my hand with an air of affability, and conducted me to a woman, whom I took, from the haughtiness of her deportment, to be the *Pallast*† of the country. He spoke several words to her, which, having heard them pronounced a thousand times by *Deterville*, I well remember: *How beautiful she is! What fine eyes! Another man replied. What grace! the symmetry of a nymph!* Except those women who said nothing, they all repeated nearly the same words. I do not yet understand their meaning, but they surely must express some agreeable ideas, being uniformly uttered with a smiling countenance.

The *Cacique* appeared highly delighted with what they said. He kept always by the side of me, or, if he quitted it for a moment to speak to any one, his eyes were still fixed upon me, while he intimated by signs what I was to do. For my part, I watched him attentively, tender
of

* The *Curacas* were petty sovereigns of a country, who had the privilege of wearing the same dress as the *Incas*.

† A general name of the Indian princesses:

of offending against the customs of a nation, so little conversant in ours.

I know not, my dear *Aza*, if I can make thee comprehend how extraordinary the manners of these savages appeared to me. There is such an impatient vivacity about them, that words do not alone suffice them for expression. They speak as much by the motion of their body, as the sound of their voice. What I have seen of their continual restlessness, has fully satisfied me of the little meaning there was in those tokens of the *Cacique*, which perplexed me so much, and betrayed me into so many false conjectures. He yesterday kissed the hands of the *Pallas*, and of all the other women; nay, he kissed even their cheeks, a thing I had never seen before. The men embraced him; some took him by the hand, others pulled him by the clothes, and all this with an impatience that we have no notion of. To judge of their understanding by the extravagance of their gestures, I am persuaded, that our wary expressions, and those sublime similies, which so naturally convey our tender feelings and affectionate thoughts, would to them appear

insipid. They would take our serious and modest looks for indications of vacancy, and the solemnity of our gait for stiffness. And yet, (wouldst thou believe it, my dear *Aza*?) notwithstanding their imperfections, wert thou here, I could be content to live amongst them. A certain complacency, that accompanies all their actions, renders them engaging; and were my soul, indeed, more happy, I should find a pleasure in the variety of objects that pass successively before my eyes. But the little resemblance they bear to thee extinguishes the charms of their novelty: thou art my only happiness, my only joy.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

A LONG time has elapsed, my dear *Aza*, without an opportunity of bestowing one moment on my darling occupation ; yet, I have a great many extraordinary things to tell thee of, and avail myself of a little leisure for that purpose, as well as I am able.

The day after my visit to the *Pallas*, *Deter-*
ville presented me with a very handsome dress,
in the fashion of his country. After my little
China had adjusted it upon me, according to
her fancy, she took me to that ingenious ma-
chine which doubles objects. Although its
effects

effects ought to have been familiar to me, I could not help being startled at seeing myself, as it were, standing before me. My new apparel was far from displeasing me, though I should, perhaps, have been less reconciled to part with my other, had it not exposed me to the gaze of curiosity. The *Cacique* came into my room while the girl was yet adding several trinkets to my dress. He stopped at the door, and watched us for some time without speaking. So lost was he in thought, that he stepped aside to let the *China* pass, and insensibly took her place: then, fixing his eyes upon me, he examined me from head to foot with a serious attention that quite disconcerted me, and which I could not account for. However, to testify my sense of this new obligation, I offered him my hand; and being unable to express my sentiments, I thought I could not please him better, than by repeating some of those words, which he took so much delight in teaching me. I tried even to pronounce them in the same tone that he does. I know not what effect they had upon him at that moment; but his eyes sparkled; his cheeks turned red; he approached me with
an

an agitated air, and seemed as if he wished to take me in his arms: then stopping suddenly, he pressed my hand, and uttered in a tone of emotion; *No—respect—her virtue—*and many other words, which were equally unintelligible to me. So saying, he ran and threw himself upon his seat at the other end of the room, where, with his head leaning upon his hands, he remained, to all appearance, in the deepest affliction. I was alarmed at his situation, not doubting but I had caused him some uneasiness. I went up to him to express my concern, and ask his forgiveness; but he gently pushed me away without looking at me, and I dared not speak to him. I was in the greatest confusion, when the servants came in with refreshment. He rose, and we ate together as usual, his grief seeming to be attended with no other consequence than a little dejection; but his kindness was the same, his tenderness the same. All this appeared to me inconceivable.

I did not venture to lift up my eyes to him, or make use of the signs, which commonly served us instead of conversation: The time was, however, so different from the ordinary hour

hour of repast, that I could not help betraying some tokens of surprise: All I could collect from him was, that we were about to change our dwelling.

The *Cacique*, after going in and out several times, took me by the hand. I yielded myself to his disposal, still ruminating on what had happened, and endeavouring to discover, if this sudden movement were not in consequence. As soon as we had passed the outer door of the house, he helped me up a pretty high step, when I found myself in a small room, in which no one can stand upright without inconvenience; to walk in it is impossible. The *Cacique*, however, the *China*, and myself, sat ourselves down with tolerable ease. This little place is prettily furnished, and has a window on each side, which sufficiently light it.

While I was examining it with surprise, and endeavouring to make out *Deterville's* reason for shutting us up so close, (oh, my dear *Aza*, how familiar are prodigies in this country!) I felt this machine, or cabin, I know not what to call it, move and shift its place. This motion brought the floating-house to my mind. I began

gan to be alarmed ; which the *Cacique* perceiving, at all times alive to the least of my anxieties, he quieted my fears, by shewing me through one of the windows, that this machine, suspended pretty near the ground, was moved by a mystery I did not comprehend. *Deterville* likewise shewed me, that several *Hamas**, of a species unknown to us, went before, and drew us after them. O light of my days ! it surely must require a genius more than human to invent such useful and singular things : but it is no less certain, that there must be in this nation some very great defects, or it doubtless would be mistress of the whole world.

We have now been four days shut up in this wonderful machine, which we quit only at night to take our rest in the first house we come to, and I never quit it without regret. I confess, my dear *Aza*, that notwithstanding my tender solicitude, I have experienced, during this journey, pleasures before unknown to me. Im-
mured, from my childhood, within the Temple,

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* A general name for beasts.

I was totally unacquainted with the beauties of the universe. What had I lost!

O, soul of my heart! nature must have diffused through her works a secret charm, which the most ingenious art cannot imitate. What I have seen of the prodigies invented by men, has not excited that rapture in my breast, which I feel in contemplating the wonders of the universe.

Immense fields, in endless variety and succession, hurry on my mind with as much rapidity as we pass through them. The eyes, at the same moment, run over, embrace, and dwell upon an infinitude of objects, equally diversified and agreeable. We appear to find no other bounds to the sight, than those of the world itself. This illusion flatters us. It gives us a pleasing idea of our own dignity, and seems to associate us with the Creator of so many wonders. At the end of a fine day, the heavens exhibit images very far surpassing even those of the earth in pomp and magnificence.

On one side, transparent clouds, collected round the setting Sun, present to our eyes mountains of shade and light, whose majestic disorder

disorder attracts our admiration, till we lose ourselves insensibly in rapture and astonishment. A star, less bright, rising on the other, receives and diffuses a fainter light upon objects, which, losing their energy by the absence of the Sun, inspire us only with that tranquil impression, so congenial to the silence that reigns over the earth. Returning to ourselves, a delicious calm penetrates our soul. We enjoy the universe as we alone possessed it: every thing we see appears to be our own. A grateful serenity invites us to agreeable reflections; and if any regrets happen to interrupt them, they proceed only from the necessity of confining us again in those foolish prisons constructed by men, and which all their industry can render but contemptible, in comparison with the works of nature.

The *Cacique* has been obliging enough to let me occasionally alight from the rolling-cabin, and contemplate at my leisure whatever he perceived excited my admiration.

If the beauties of heaven and earth possess over our souls so powerful an attraction, those of the forests, more simple and affecting, inspired me

me with no less pleasure and astonishment. How delightful are the woods, my dear *Aza*! On entering them, an universal charm surprises all our senses, and confounds their use. We fancy that we see the cool, refreshing breeze, before we feel it. The different shades of colour in the foliage soften the light that penetrates it, and seem to strike the mind and the sight together. An agreeable, but indeterminate fragrance leaves us in doubt, whether it affects the taste or the smell. The air, even, imperceptibly conveys throughout our frame a genuine delight, which seems to give us a new sense, without the power of distinguishing its organ.

O, my dear *Aza*, how would thy presence embellish these pure pleasures! How have I longed to share them with thee! Hadst thou been the witness of my tender thoughts, thou shouldst have found in the sentiments of my heart charms still more powerful than those in the beauties of the universe.

LETTER XIII.



I AM, at last, my dear *Aza*, in a city they call *Paris*. This is the end of our journey; but according to appearances, it will not be that of my troubles. Since my arrival, more attentive than ever to all that passes, my discoveries produce only pain, and forebode nothing but misfortune. I find thy idea in the least curious of my desires, but do not meet with it in any of the objects I see.

From what I can judge by the time it took us in passing through this place, and the number of inhabitants the streets are thronged with, it contains more people than two or three of our countries could collect together. It brings
to

to my mind the wonders that have been told me of *Quito*. I endeavour to find a resemblance to the notion I have formed of that great city; but, alas, what a difference!

Paris contains bridges, rivers, trees, fields: it looks, indeed, more like an universe, than a particular seat of habitation. It were in vain my attempting to give thee a true conception of the height of the houses, which is so prodigious, that it is easier to believe nature produced them as they are, than to comprehend how men could build them. It is here that the *Cacique's* family reside. Their house is almost as magnificent as that of the Sun. The furniture and some parts of the walls are of gold; the rest is adorned with a variegated tissue of the choicest colours, which tolerably represent the beauties of nature.

At our arrival, *Deterville* made me understand, that he was taking me to his mother's room. We found her reclining on a bed of pretty near the same form, and made of the same metal,* as that of the *Incas*. After presenting

* The beds, chairs, and tables of the *Incas* were of solid gold.

senting her hand to the *Cacique*, who kissed it, bowing almost to the ground, she embraced him; but, with a kindness so cold, a joy so constrained, that had I not been prepared, I should not have discovered the bias of nature in the caresses of this mother. After a moment's conversation, the *Cacique* beckoned me to her. She cast a disdainful look at me, and without making any answer to what her son said to her, continued unconcernedly to turn a thread round her fingers, which hung to a small bit of gold.

Deterville left us to meet a tall, portly man, who had advanced some steps towards him. He embraced both him, and a woman, who was employed in the same manner as the *Pallas*.

Scarce had the *Cacique* entered this room, when a girl about my age ran up to him, and followed him with a timid haste, that was something remarkable. Joy sparkled in her countenance; without banishing a rooted and interesting sorrow. *Deterville* embraced her last, but with a tenderness so natural, that it touched
me

me to the soul: Ah, my dear *Aza*, what would be our transports, if, after so many troubles, fate should reunite us !

During this interval, I continued out of respect* near the *Pallas* ; I dared not, indeed, either quit my place, or lift up my eyes to her. The severe glances, which every now and then she gave me, completed my embarrassment, and put me under a restraint that tortured my very thoughts. The girl, at last, as if she suspected the cause of my confusion, having left *Deterville*, came and took me by the hand, and led me to a window, where we sat down together. Though I did not understand any thing she said to me, her eyes, full of goodness, spoke the universal language of benevolence; they inspired me with confidence and friendship. I would willingly have testified my feelings to her, but not being able to express myself as I wished, I pronounced all I knew of her tongue. She smiled more than once,
glancing

* All single women, though of the blood-royal, shewed a great respect to those who were married.

glancing at *Deterville* with an arch and interesting air.

I was enjoying this kind of conversation, when the *Pallas* uttered some words in a pretty loud voice, looking sternly at my young friend, who cast down her eyes, thrust away my hand, which she before held in hers, and took no more notice of me.

Some time after, an old woman, of a ferocious aspect, entered the room, went up to the *Pallas*, then, taking me by the arm, led me into an apartment at the top of the house, and there left me alone.

Although this moment, my dear *Aza*, ought not to be reckoned the most unhappy of my life, yet, it was by no means the least distressing. I had promised myself, at my journey's end, some solace to my inquietudes. I expected, at all events, to meet with the same kindness from the *Cacique's* family, that I had experienced from him. The cold reception of the *Pallas*, the sudden alteration in the manners of the girl, the rudeness of this woman in dragging me from a place where I had an interest in staying, the indifference of *Deterville*, who

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did

did not interfere, even when a sort of violence was offered me ; in short, every circumstance that could add a pang to an afflicted soul presented itself, at once, in the most melancholy shape. I thought myself deserted by all the world. I was bitterly deploring my wretched destiny, when the entrance of my *China* agreeably surprised me. The sight of her, at such a time, was a great blessing to me. I ran to her ; I embraced her with tears ; she mingled them with her own : her sympathy was dear to me. When we feel ourselves reduced to self-commiseration, the pity of others is very precious to us. The marks of affection in this young woman alleviated my pain. I related to her my troubles, as if she could understand me ; I asked her a thousand questions, as if she could answer them. Her tears spoke to my heart ; mine continued to flow, but with less bitterness. I was not without the hope of seeing *Deterville* again at the hour of repast ; but my meal was brought up to me, and I saw nothing of him. Since I lost thee, dear idol of my heart, the *Cacique* is the only creature that has shewn me unremitting kindnesses :
the

the habit of seeing him became a necessity. His absence redoubled my affliction. After expecting him in vain for some time, I laid me down : but sleep had not yet dried up my tears before I saw him enter my room, accompanied by the young person, whose sharp disdain had so sensibly affected me. She threw herself upon my bed, and by a thousand caresses seemed willing to atone for the ill-treatment she had shewn me. The *Cacique* sat down by the bedside. He appeared to feel as much pleasure at seeing me again, as I did to find that I was not forsaken. They talked together with their eyes fixed upon me, and heaped on me the most tender tokens of affection. Their conversation, by degrees, became more serious, and which, without understanding it, I could easily judge, was founded upon confidence and friendship. I took care not to interrupt them; but as soon as they returned to me, I endeavoured to gain from the *Cacique* some explanation of what had appeared to me the most extraordinary since my arrival. All I could learn from his answers was, that the name of the young person before me was *Celina*; that she was his

sister; that the tall man I had seen in the *Pallas's* apartment was his elder brother, and the other young woman that brother's wife.

Celina became more dear to me, when I understood she was the *Cacique's* sister; and the time passed so agreeably in the company of both, that I did not perceive it was day-light before they left me. After they were gone, I devoted the remainder of the time, destined to repose, in conversing with thee. This is my only happiness, my only joy. It is to thee alone, dear soul of my soul, that I unfold my heart: thou shalt ever be the sole depository of my secrets, my affection, and my thoughts.

LETTER XIV.



DID I not continue, my dear *Aza*, to steal from my sleep the time I devote to thee, I should no longer enjoy those delicious moments, in which I exist for thee only. I have been obliged to resume my Virgin's dress, and am forced to remain the whole day in a room full of people, who are every instant changing and renewed without apparent diminution.

This involuntary dissipation, in spite of myself, frequently diverts me from my tender thoughts. But if I lose for a few moments, that lively attention which incessantly unites my soul to thine, I find thee soon again in the

flattering comparisons I make of thy sweet idea with all that surrounds me.

In the different countries I have passed through, I never met with any savages so haughtily familiar as these. The women, in particular, seem to have about them a disdainful civility that disgusts human nature, and which would perhaps inspire me with as much contempt for them, as they shew for others, if I knew them better. One of them yesterday occasioned me an insult, which afflicts me still. At the time when the assembly was most crowded, having already spoken to several persons without perceiving me, I know not if by chance or whether some one marked me out to her, but she no sooner cast her eyes upon me, than she burst into a fit of laughter, quitted her place precipitately, came up to me, made me rise from my seat, and after turning me about as often as her vivacity prompted her, after fingering every particle of my dress with a scrupulous attention, she beckoned to a young man, and began again with him to examine my person.

Indignant

Indignant as I was at the liberty they both took with me, yet concluding the woman, from the richness of her dress, to be a *Pallas*, and the young man, from the sumptuousness of his, (for he was covered all over with plates of gold), to be an *Anqui*,* I dared not oppose their will. But this rash savage, emboldened by the familiarity of the *Pallas*, and perhaps by my diffidence, having the audacity to put his hand upon my neck, I pushed him away with a surprise and indignation that gave him to understand, I was better acquainted with the laws of decorum than he was. On hearing me cry out, *Deterville* ran up. No sooner had he spoken a few words to the young savage, than the latter, leaning with one hand upon his shoulder, set up such a violent laugh, as quite distorted his features.

The *Cacique* disengaged himself, and, turning red, said a something to him in so cold a tone, that the young man's gaiety instantly vanished; and seeming to have nothing to reply,

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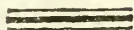
he

* Prince of the blood. No one was suffered to wear gold upon his clothes without the permission of the *Inca*, which he gave only to princes of the blood royal.

he made the best of his way without opening his lips, and we saw no more of him.

O, my dear *Aza*, with what a veneration do the manners of this country inspire me for those of the children of the Sun ! How does the temerity of this young *Anqui* recal to my fond remembrance thy delicate respect, thy prudent reserve, and the charms of propriety that reigned in our conversations ! It struck me, dear delight of my soul, the first moment I beheld thee, and I will cherish the impression as long as I live. Thou alone unitest in thyself all the perfections which nature has distributed separately on mankind ; as she has concentrated in my heart every sentiment of tenderness and admiration, that will attach me to thee until death.

LETTER XV.



THE longer I live with the *Cacique* and his sister, my dear *Aza*, the more difficulty I find in reconciling myself to believe that they are of this nation: they alone know what virtue is, and respect it. The simple manners, the native goodness, the modest cheerfulness of *Celina*, would make us readily conclude she had been brought up amongst our Virgins: while the amiable deportment, the tender consideration, of her brother, would as easily persuade us, that he is descended from the blood of the *Incas*. They both treat me with as much humanity, as we should have shewn them, had the like misfortunes driven them amongst us. The *Ca-*

cique, I have no doubt, is a tributary* of thine. He never enters my room without making me a present of some wonderful thing or other, which this country abounds in. Sometimes he brings me pieces of the machine that doubles objects, enclosed in little boxes of a curious substance : at others, light stones of a surprising lustre, with which they adorn here almost every part of the body : they hang them to the ears ; they put them upon the breast, round the neck, upon their shoes ; all which produces a truly pleasing effect. But my fancy is most taken with some small instruments of a very hard metal, and of singular convenience. One sort is used in putting together pieces of work, which *Celina* teaches me to do : another, of a cutting form, serves to divide all kinds of cloths, of which we can make as many bits as we please, without the least trouble, and in a manner highly diverting.

I have an infinite number of other rarities more extraordinary still, but not being in use
with

* The *Caciques* and *Curacas* were obliged to furnish the dress and provisions of the *Inca* and the queen. They never came into their presence without offering them a tribute peculiar to the province they commanded.

with us, I do not find any expressions in our language that could give thee an idea of them.

I keep, my dear *Aza*, all these gifts carefully for thee. Besides the pleasure I anticipate in thy surprise when thou seest them, I enjoy a heartfelt satisfaction in the persuasion that they are thine.

Were not, indeed, the *Cacique* a vassal of thine, would he pay me a tribute, which he is sensible can be due alone to thy supreme rank? The respect he has always shewn me made me think, that he was not unacquainted with my birth: while the presents with which he honors me convince me, that he is not ignorant I am to be thy consort, since he treats me already as *Mama-Oella*.*

This conviction cheers my spirits, and calms a part of my inquietudes. I apprehend that the power of expressing myself is only wanting, in order to be informed of the *Cacique's* reasons for detaining me here, and to induce him to restore me into thy hands. But alas! till then, I have many more troubles to encounter.

F 6

There

* A name given to the queens when they ascended the throne.

There is a great difference between the temper of *Madame* (that is the name of *Deterville's* mother) and the amiable disposition of her children. Far from treating me with the same kindness, she observes on all occasions a coldness and disdain that mortify me, and which I cannot account for: and yet, by an inconsistency of conduct I understand still less, she requires me to be continually with her. This is an insupportable torment to me. The greatest restraint prevails where she is. It is only by stealth, that *Celina* and her brother make signs of regard to me. They themselves are afraid to speak freely before her, and continue, therefore, to spend a part of the night in my room. It is the only time that we enjoy in peace the pleasure of each others company; and, though I can take no share in their conversations, their presence is always desirable: It is not for want of attention from either that I am not happy. Alas! my dear *Aza*, little do they know that I cannot be happy, severed from the object I adore; that I believe myself to exist only, while thy remembrance and my love occupy me entirely.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.



I HAVE so few *Quipos* left, my dear *Aza*, that I am almost afraid to use them. When I fain would proceed to knot them, the dread of seeing them exhausted stops me, as if by sparing I could multiply them. I am going to lose the pleasure of my soul, the support of my life. No resource will then be left me to relieve the weight of thy absence : I shall sink under it.

I tasted an exquisite delight in preserving the remembrance of the most secret movements of my heart to offer thee its homage. I wished to preserve the memory of the principal customs of this singular nation, to amuse thy leisure

sure in more happy days. Alas ! I have now but very little hope of fulfilling my intentions.

If I find at present so much trouble in arranging my ideas, how shall I recal them hereafter without external aid ? One way, it is true, is offered me ; but the execution is so difficult, that I believe it absolutely impracticable.

The *Cacique* has brought me a savage of this country, who attends every day to give me lessons in his language, and to teach me a method, in use here, of rendering a sort of existence to ideas. This is done by drawing with a feather certain small figures, which are called *letters*, upon a white and thin substance, they term *paper*. These figures have names, which being put together represent the sounds of words : but these names and sounds seem to differ so little from each other, that if I one day succeed in learning them, I am sure it will cost me a great deal of trouble. This poor savage takes incredible pains to instruct me, and I take much more to learn. I make, however, so little progress, that I should entirely give up the undertaking, could any other method be discovered to satisfy myself of thy lot
and :

and mine : but, alas ! there is none my dear *Aza*. My only pleasure, therefore, consists in this new and singular study. I would willingly be alone, in order to pursue it without interruption ; and the necessity I am under of being always in *Madame's* room is become a punishment to me.

At first, by exciting the curiosity of others, I amused my own ; but, when the eyes only can be employed, they are very soon satisfied. All the women paint their faces of the same colour ; their manners are always the same ; and they are always, I think, saying the same things. Appearances are less uniform in the men : some assume an air of thought ; but, in general, I suspect this nation not to be what it seems ; affectation appears to be its ruling character.

If those external marks of zeal and sincerity were natural, with which they embellish here the most trifling duties of society, the hearts of these people, my dear *Aza*, must doubtless excel ours in goodness and humanity. Is it possible ?

Had

Had they as much serenity in the soul as upon the countenance; if that propensity to joy, which I remark in all their actions, were sincere, would they chuse for their amusements such spectacles as that they have shewn me.

They took me to a place, where, as was formerly the custom in thy palace, they represent the actions of men who are no more;* with this difference, that we revived the memory of the wisest only and most virtuous, while here, I think, they celebrate the most senseless and depraved. Those who personate them rave and toss as if they were mad; nay, one indeed I saw transported so by rage as even to kill himself. The beautiful women, whom they seem to persecute, weep incessantly; while the attitudes of despair into which they throw themselves, have no need of the words that accompany them to convey the excess of their affliction. Could one believe, my dear *Aza*, that a whole people, whose appearance is so humane, should take delight in the representation of misfortunes

* The *Incas* had a kind of drama represented, the subjects of which were taken from the most memorable actions of their predecessors.

misfortunes or of crimes, which have formerly degraded or sacrificed their fellow-creatures ?

But, perhaps, in France, the hideousness of vice is necessary to animate the pursuit of virtue. This idea spontaneously strikes me; if it be a just one, how should I pity such a nation ! In ours, more favoured by nature, goodness is recommended by its own attractions. We require only patterns of virtue to become virtuous, as we need only to love thee to render ourselves amiable.

LETTER XVII.



I KNOW not what to think, my dear *Aza*, of the genius of this nation. It runs in extremes with so much rapidity, that it requires more sagacity than I possess to define its character.

They have shewn me a spectacle totally different from the former. That, cruel and frightful, makes reason revolt, and debases humanity: while this, amusing and agreeable, copies after nature, and does honour to good sense. It is composed of a much greater number of men and women than the former. In this also are exhibited some actions of human life; but, whenever they express pain or pleasure, joy or
sorrow

sorrow, it is always by songs and dances. Surely, my dear *Aza*, the intelligence of sounds must be universal; for, I found it no more difficult to be affected with the various passions they represented, than had they been conveyed in our tongue; and this appears to me very natural. Human speech, is, without doubt, of man's invention, since it differs according to different nations. Nature, more powerful and attentive to the wants and enjoyments of her creatures, has assigned to them general means of expressing them, which are excellently imitated by the songs I have heard.

If it be true, that sharp sounds better express the need of help in cases of sudden fright, or of deep affliction, than words understood in one part of the world, and which have no meaning in another; it is no less certain, that pitiful complaints excite in our hearts a more sensible compassion than words, whose whimsical arrangement frequently occasions a contrary effect. Does not a light and chearful sound irresistibly convey into our souls a lively pleasure, which the recital of an entertaining story or facetious conceit does but imperfectly produce?

duce? What language has expressions capable of communicating innocent delight with so much success as the natural disport of animals? Dances, it seems to me, are meant to imitate them: they inspire us, at least, with a similar sensation.

In short, my dear *Aza*, every thing in this spectacle is consistent with nature and humanity. Ah! what benefit can be conferred on man equal to that of inspiring him with joy? I felt, nay was almost, in spite of me, transported with it myself, when it was interrupted by an accident that happened to *Celina*.

In coming out, we withdrew a little from the croud, and had hold of each others arm for fear of falling. *Deterville* was some steps before us conducting his sister in law, when a young savage of an amiable person accosted *Celina*, said a few words to her in a very low voice, gave her a bit of paper, which she had scarcely strength enough to take, and went away.

Celina, who was, at first, so much alarmed as even to shake me with her trembling, turned her head languishingly towards him when he left us. She appeared to me so weak, that suppos-
ing

ing her attacked with some sudden indisposition I was going to call *Deterville* to her assistance: but she instantly stopped me, and, by putting her finger upon her lips, enjoined my silence. I was willing to endure my uneasiness rather than disobey her.

The same evening, when *Deterville* and his sister entered my room, *Celina* shewed the *Cacique* the paper she had received. By the little I could collect from their conversation, I should have concluded she had been in love with the young man who had given it to her, were it possible to be frightened at the sight of those we love.

I would fain impart to thee, my dear *Aza*; a great many other observations I have made; but, alas! my *Quipos* are just finished; I am come to the last thread; I am tying the last knots. Those very knots, which appeared to me a chain of communication between my heart and thine, are now only the melancholy objects of my regret. The illusion forsakes me, and frightful truth assumes its place. My wandering thoughts, bewildered in the immense void of absence, will from henceforth be annihilated

hilated with the same rapidity as time. It seems to me, my dear *Aza*, like another separation; I fancy they are tearing me afresh from thy love. I am losing, I am leaving thee; I shall see thee no more. *Aza*, sweet hope of my heart, how distant are we shortly to be removed from each other!

LETTER XVIII.



OH, my dear *Aza*, what a painful chasm has there been in my life ! The Sun has performed one half of his course, since last I enjoyed the artificial pleasure of believing I conversed with the object I adore. How long did this twofold absence seem to me ! What fortitude did it not require to support it ! I lived only in the future ; the present appeared unworthy my regard. All my thoughts were but so many wishes ; all my reflections one series of projects ; every sensation the sensation of hope.

Though scarcely yet able to form these figures, I hasten to make them the interpreters of my love. This tender occupation cheers
my

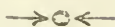
my drooping spirits. Restored to myself, I begin to live again. *Aza*, how dear art thou to me! What joy do I feel in telling it thee, in painting it, in giving to this sentiment all sorts of existence it is capable of receiving! I would inscribe it on the hardest metal, upon the walls of my chamber, upon my garments, upon every thing that surrounds me, and proclaim it in all languages. How fatal, alas! has been the knowledge of that which I now speak! How deceitful the hope that induced me to learn it! In proportion as I advanced, a new universe presented itself before me. Objects assumed a different form; every progress I made discovered a fresh misfortune. My mind, my heart, my eyes, all betrayed me: the Sun himself deceived me. He enlightens the whole world, of which thy empire constitutes but a part, as well as the other kingdoms that compose it. Do not think, my dear *Aza*, they have amused my credulity with these strange things. Incredible as they seem, they have been too well proved.

Far from being amongst people that own thy supremacy, I am under a dominion not only
foreign,

foreign, but so remote from thy empire, that our nation had been yet unknown here, if the avarice of the Spaniards had not made them surmount the most formidable dangers to reach our devoted country.

Will not love then perform what has been accomplished by the thirst of riches? If I am dear to thee; if thou wishest for me; if thou still thinkest of the unhappy *Zilia*, I have every thing to expect from thy tenderness and generosity. Could I retrace the ways that would lead me to thy palace, the perils to be encountered, the hardships to be borne, would be but as so many pleasures to my heart. Beguiling the time with the hope of seeing thee; the deserts would appear as my native gardens, and the element I dread an object of delight.

LETTER XIX.



I AM yet, my dear *Aza*, so little versed in the art of writing, that it takes me a considerable time to form a very few lines. It frequently happens, that after having written a great deal, I cannot make out myself what I meant to express. This embarrassment confuses my ideas, and makes me forget what I had with pain recalled to my memory. I begin again; I do no better; and still I go on.

I should find in it more facility, had I only to convey to thee the expressions of my tenderness: the inspirations of my heart would smooth all difficulties. But I would fain also give thee

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an account of all that has passed during the interval of my silence. I would not have thee ignorant of any of my actions. They have been of late, however, so uninteresting and so uniform, that it were impossible for me to distinguish one from another.

The principal event of my life has been *Deterville's* departure. He has been gone for a space of time, they call *six months*, to make war for the good of his sovereign. When he went away, I was entirely unacquainted with his language: but, from the lively regret he manifested on taking leave of his sister and me, I concluded we were going to lose him for a considerable time. I shed many tears. A thousand apprehensions rushed into my heart, which the kindness of *Celina* could not remove. I lost in him the most flattering hope of seeing thee again. To whom could I have flown, had any new misfortunes happened to me? Not a creature understood me.

It was not long before I experienced the effects of this absence. *Madame* (whose disdain I had too justly suspected, and who kept me so closely confined in her chamber, merely to gra-

tify a certain vanity, as it is said, which she derived from my birth and the power she had over me) ordered me to be shut up with *Celina* in a house of virgins, where we still are.

This retreat would not be unpleasant to me, if, just as I was capable of understanding every thing, it did not deprive me of the necessary information respecting my design of returning to thee. The virgins, who inhabit it, are kept in such profound ignorance, that they cannot satisfy my most trifling curiosity: The worship they pay the divinity of the country, requires them to renounce all his benefits, the illumination of the mind, the sensibility of the heart, and I firmly believe, even reason itself, at least if one may judge from their conversation.

Though equally confined, they have one advantage over ours in the Temple of the Sun. Here the walls, open in some parts, and only closed by cross bits of iron, placed pretty near each other to prevent them from going out, afford the opportunity of seeing and conversing with people outside; and these places are called *Parlours*.

It is by favour of this accommodation, that I continue to take lessons in writing. I speak to no one but the master who gives them to me, whose ignorance of every thing, except the art he professes, is ill calculated to relieve mine. *Celina* seems, indeed, no better informed. I remark in the answers she makes to my questions a certain embarrassment, which can only proceed from an awkward dissimulation, or conscious inability. Be what it may, her conversation is always confined to the affairs of her own heart, and to those of her family.

The young Frenchman, who accosted her one day on coming out of the spectacle where they sing, is, as I suspected, her lover. But *Madame Deterville*, who is averse to their marriage, forbids her seeing him; and the more effectually to prevent it, she will not even suffer her to speak to any body. It is not that her choice is unworthy of her; but this imperious and unnatural mother, availing herself of a barbarous custom established among the great of this country, has forced *Celina* to take a virgin's habit, in order to increase the opulence of her eldest son. With the same view, she has already obliged

Deterville to enter into a certain religious Order, which he cannot be released from, after he has once pronounced a particular form of words, called *Vows*

Celina resists, to the utmost of her power, the sacrifice they require of her. Her spirits are supported by letters from her lover, which I receive from my writing-master, and give to her. Fretting has, however, so altered her temper, that far from shewing me the same kindnesses she did before I spoke her language, she spreads a bitterness over our intercourse that augments my troubles.

The perpetual confident of her inquietudes, I listen to her without weariness; I pity her without constraint; I comfort her with affection: and if my tenderness, awakened by the description of her own, sometimes betrays me to seek relief to my oppressed heart by repeating only thy name, impatience and contempt are depicted upon her countenance; she disputes thy understanding, thy virtues, and even thy love. Nay, my *China*, (I know her by no other name, and this affording some amusement she has retained it) my *China*, who seemed to love me, who obeyed
me

me in every thing else, presumes to advise me think of thee no more ; or, if I bid her hold her tongue, she immediately leaves the room : *Celina* enters ; I am obliged to dissemble my uneasiness. This tyrannical restraint completes my misfortunes. The painful satisfaction alone remains to me of covering this paper with expressions of my tenderness, since it is the only susceptible witness of the sentiments of my heart.

Alas ! perhaps the pains I am taking may be fruitless : perhaps thou wilt never know that I lived for thee alone. This dreadful idea depresses my spirits, without shaking my resolution of continuing to write to thee. I preserve my illusion to preserve for thee my life ; I drive away reason that would cruelly undeceive me. Did I not hope, my dear *Aza*, to see thee again, I should assuredly perish. Without thee, life is an insupportable burthen to me.

LETTER XX.



HITHERTO, my dear *Aza*, wholly taken up with the troubles of my heart, I have been silent upon those that affect my mind, but which, notwithstanding, are no less painful. One, indeed, I experience of a nature unknown amongst us, occasioned by the general customs of this nation, which are so different from ours, that unless I were to give thee some idea of them, thou wouldst not know how to compassionate my sufferings.

The government of this empire, totally opposite to that of thine, cannot but be defective. With us, thou knowest the *Capa-Inca* is obliged to provide for the subsistence of his people: whereas, in
Europe,

Europe, the sovereigns derive theirs only from the labour of their subjects. Hence it is, that crimes and calamities mostly proceed here from ill-supplied wants.

The misfortune of the nobles, in general, arises from the difficulty they find in reconciling their apparent magnificence with their real misery. The lower orders support themselves entirely by what is called *commerce*, or *industry*; dishonesty is the least of the crimes that result from it. One part of the people are obliged to seek their livelihood by appealing to the charity of others, which is, indeed, so scantily bestowed, as hardly to keep the poor creatures from starving.

Without gold, it is impossible to procure a portion of that land, which nature has given in common to all men. Without possessing what is called *property*, it is impossible to have gold; and by an inconsistency that offends common sense, and sets reason at defiance, this haughty nation, complying with the laws of a false honour it has invented, stigmatizes the person who receives from any but the sovereign what is necessary to the support of his life and condition. This sovereign dispenses his bounty to so few of his sub-

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jects, in proportion to the number of the needy, that there would be as much folly in aspiring to have a share of it, as reproach in obtaining liberation by death from the impossibility of living without shame.

The knowledge, at first, of these melancholy truths, excited in my heart only pity for the distressed, and indignation against the laws: but alas! with what bitter reflections does the contemptuous manner, in which I hear them speak of those who are not rich, inspire me of my own situation! I have neither gold, nor lands, nor industry, and yet necessarily compose a part of the citizens of this place. Oh heaven! in what class ought I to be ranked?

Although I am a stranger to every sense of shame which does not proceed from the commission of a fault; although I see the folly of blushing for causes independent of my will or power, I cannot help suffering from the opinion that others have of me. This pain were insupportable to me, did I not hope, that thy generosity will one day enable me to reward those, who, in spite of my wishes, debase me by benefits, with which I thought myself once honoured.

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Not that *Celina* omits any opportunity to relieve my anxiety on this head; but every thing I see, every thing I gather from the people of this country, inspires me with a general suspicion of their words. Their virtues, my dear *Aza*, are no less chimerical than their riches. The furniture, which I took to be of gold, is but thinly covered with it; its real substance is wood: so, what they call *politeness* lightly veils their imperfections under the semblance of virtue; but, with the least attention, the cheat is as easily detected, as that of their false opulence.

I am indebted for a part of this information to a sort of writing, which they call *books*. Although I meet, at present, with great difficulty in understanding their contents, they are very useful to me. I gather notions from them; *Celina* explains all she knows; and I form such ideas as appear to me just.

Some of these books record the actions, others the thoughts of men. I cannot express to thee, my dear *Aza*, the infinite pleasure I should take in reading them, if I understood them better, nor the extreme desire I feel to be acquainted with some of their divine authors. I con-

ceive, that they are to the soul what the Sun is to the earth; and that I should derive from them all the information and assistance I want. But I see no prospect of ever attaining so desirable an end. Although *Celina* reads a good deal, she is not sufficiently informed to satisfy me. She has scarcely given it a thought, that books were composed by men: she knows nothing of their names, nor even whether they are still living.

I will bring thee, my dear *Aza*, all I can collect of these wonderful works. I will explain them to thee in our language, and shall taste the supreme felicity of giving a new pleasure to the object of my love. Alas! shall I ever have the opportunity?

LETTER

LETTER XXI.

I SHALL not, for the future, be in want of matter to amuse thee with, my dear *Aza*. An opportunity has been allowed me of speaking to a *Cusipota*, whom they call a *Friar*. Thoroughly versed in every science, he has promised to make me as wise as himself. With all the accomplishments of a great lord, and the learning of an *Amauta*, he is equally conversant in the knowledge of the world and the tenets of his religion. His conversation, more useful than a book, has afforded me a satisfaction I had not enjoyed since my misfortunes severed me from thee.

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He came to teach me the religion of France, and exhort me to embrace it. From the way in which he speaks of the virtues it prescribes, they doubtless are drawn from the law of nature, and are, in fact, as pure as our own. But I have not penetration enough to discover the analogy there should be between the religion, and the manners and customs of the nation that professes it: I find, on the contrary, an opposition so palpable, that my reason absolutely refuses to subscribe to it.

With regard to the origin and principles of this religion, they appeared to me no less reconcileable, than the history of *Mancocapac*, and the lake *Tisicaca*. The moral is so fine, that I should have listened to the *Cusipata* with more deference, had he not treated with contempt the holy worship we pay the Sun. All prejudice destroys confidence. I could have retorted against himself, the arguments he opposed to mine: but, if the laws of humanity forbid us from using personal violence to a fellow-creature, because it is doing him an injury, much less ought we to wound his soul by a contempt of its opinions. I contented myself with offering
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him my sentiments without contradicting his. Besides, an interest more dear to my heart urged me to change the subject of our discourse. I seized the first opportunity of interrupting him, to inquire how far *Paris* was from *Cuzco*, and whether it were possible to go from one to the other. The *Cusipata* answered me with kindness; and, although his account of the distance between those two cities was very disheartening; although he represented to me the difficulty as almost insurmountable of performing the journey, it was sufficient for me to know the thing was practicable to confirm my perseverance, and encourage me to communicate my design to the good friar. He seemed amazed, and endeavoured to dissuade me from the undertaking in such tender words, that even my heart was affected at his description of the dangers to which I should expose myself. My resolution was, however, unshaken. I earnestly entreated the *Cusipata* to put me in the way of returning to my own country. He declined entering into particulars, and simply told me, that *Deterville* being a man, on account of his high birth and personal

sonal merit, of considerable influence, could do any thing he pleased; and, that having an uncle of great authority at the Spanish court, he could more easily than any one procure me tidings from our unhappy country.

To persuade me more effectually to wait for his return (which he assured me would be very soon) he added, that after the obligations I was under to that generous benefactor, I could not honourably dispose of myself without his consent. I agreed with him, and heard with pleasure his encomium of those amiable qualities, which distinguish *Deterville* from persons of his rank. The weight of gratitude is very light, my dear *Aza*, when it is imposed on us by the hands of virtue.

The learned man also informed me, how chance had led the Spaniards to thy unfortunate empire, and that the thirst of gold was the sole cause of their cruelty. He then explained to me, in what manner I had fallen by the chance of war into the hands of *Deterville*, in consequence of a battle that he gloriously won, after having taken from the Spaniards several ships.

ships, and that, amongst the rest, which carried me from thee.

In short, my dear *Aza*, though he has confirmed my misfortunes, he has dissipated, at least, the cruel darkness in which I lived, with regard to so many calamitous events; and this is no small alleviation to my troubles: for the rest I wait the return of *Deterville*. He is noble, humane, virtuous: I have every thing to expect from his generosity. If he restores me to thee, what an obligation! what joy! what felicity!

LETTER XXII.



I HAD flattered myself with the hope, my dear *Aza*, of meeting with a friend in the learned *Cusipata*; but a second visit he has made me has destroyed the good opinion which I had entertained of him in the former. If at first he appeared to me courteous and sincere, this time I found nothing but rudeness and hypocrisy in all that he said to me.

My mind being at ease on the subject of my tenderness, I wished to satisfy my curiosity respecting those wonderful men who compose books. I began by inquiring what rank they held in the world, what veneration was paid them, in short, what honours or triumphs they were

were decreed for so many advantages they afford to society.

I do not know what the *Cusipata* saw diverting in my questions; but he smiled at each of them, and answered me in terms so idle, so extravagant, that it was not difficult for me to discover he was only deceiving me.

Indeed, if what he says be true, these men, indisputably superior to others for the dignity and usefulness of their employment, go frequently unrewarded, and are obliged to sell their thoughts, as people sell, to get a livelihood, the meanest productions of the earth. Is this possible?

Falshood, my dear *Aza*, no less disgusts me under the transparent mask of pleasantry, than beneath the thick veil of deliberate deceit: the friar's exasperated me, and I resented it by my silence.

Unable to satisfy myself on this head, I resumed the conversation upon the project of my voyage: but instead of dissuading me from it with the same gentleness as before, he opposed it with such strong, such irresistible arguments, that my love only for thee I found capable to combat them;
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and I did not hesitate to confess it. At first he put on a smiling countenance, and seeming to doubt the sincerity of my words, answered me only by jests, which, contemptible as they were, did not fail to provoke me. I endeavoured to convince him of the truth of them; but in proportion as my expressions confirmed the sentiments of my heart, he assumed a stern aspect, and his words became severe. He dared even to tell me, that my affection for thee was incompatible with virtue; that I must renounce one or the other; in short, that I could not love thee without sinning.

At these foolish remarks the most lively indignation took possession of my soul. I forgot the moderation I had prescribed myself; I loaded him with reproaches; I gave him my opinion of the falseness of his words; I protested a thousand times my indelible attachment to thee, and then left him, without waiting an explanation, and ran and shut myself in my room, where I was sure he could not follow me.

Oh, my dear *Aza*, how fantastical is the reason of this country! It agrees in general, that the first of virtues is to do good, to be true to
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our engagements: and yet it forbids us in particular from keeping those, which the purest sentiment has contracted: it enjoins acknowledgement, and seems to prescribe ingratitude.

They would applaud me, could I reinstate thee on the throne of thy ancestors; and yet I am criminal in preserving thee a boon more precious, than all the empires of the world. They would smile upon me, could I requite thy kindnesses with the treasures of Peru.

Destitute and dependent, my tenderness for thee is all I possess: they would have me rob thee too of that. One must necessarily be ungrateful in order to be estimable. Ah, my dear *Aza*, to cease loving thee for a moment, were to violate every virtue. True to their laws, I will be so to my own heart; I will live for thee alone.

LETTER

LETTER XXIII.

I BELIEVE, my dear *Aza*, nothing but the joy of seeing thee could exceed that which I felt at the return of *Deterville*: but, as if I were never to taste it unmingled with regret, it was very soon succeeded by a grief that still oppresses me.

Celina was yesterday morning in my room, when somebody came and whispered her out. She had not been gone long before she sent for me. I ran into the parlour. How was I surprised to find her brother with her! I did not disguise the pleasure I felt at seeing him. He had a claim to my friendship and esteem. These sentiments are nearly allied to virtues;
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and I expressed them with all the sincerity of my heart. I saw my deliverer, the only support of my hopes. I was going to speak, without reserve, of thee, of my tenderness, and my intentions: my joy swelled almost to rapture.

I was ignorant of the French language when *Deterville* went away. How many things had I to tell him! how many questions to ask! how many thanks to give him! I wished to say all at once; I spoke badly, yet knew not how to stop.

During this time, I perceived that the gloom, which, on entering, I had remarked upon the countenance of *Deterville*, disappeared and gave way to joy. The delight I took in contributing to his happiness encouraged me the more to promote it. Could I do, indeed, too much for a friend, to whom I owe every thing, and from whom I expect every thing? My simplicity, however, betrayed him into an error, which costs me, at present, a great many tears.

Celina was coming out of the parlour as I entered. Her presence might, perhaps, have spared so painful a disclosure.

Deterville,

Deterville, attentive to my words, seemed to take a pleasure in listening to them, without attempting to interrupt me. I know not what possessed me whenever I wished to ask him some questions about my journey, and to explain to him my reasons for undertaking it; but my speech failed me. While I was in vain endeavouring to recover it, he seized the opportunity of this momentary silence, and on one knee before the grate, to which his hands were both fixed, he uttered in an agitated tone: "To what cause, divine *Zilia*, am I to attribute the pleasure I see as artlessly expressed in your lovely eyes, as in your conversation? Am I the happiest of men, even at that instant, when my sister informed me I was most to be pitied?" "I know not," answered I, "what uneasiness *Celina* could have given you; but, I am very certain, you never will receive any from me." "And yet she tells me," he replied, "that I must not hope for your love." "What!" cried I, interrupting him, "that I do not love you! Ah *Deterville*! how can your sister blacken me with such a crime? The idea of ingratitude seizes me with horror: I should execrate myself,

self, could I think that I were capable of ceasing to love you."

While I pronounced these few words, he appeared, by the eagerness of his looks, as if he would read my very soul.

"You love me, *Zilia*," said he; "you love me; you tell it me with your own lips. I would have given my life to have heard this heavenly confession, and which I cannot believe even now I do hear it. *Zilia*, my dear *Zilia*, do you really love me? Are you not deceiving yourself? Your tone, your eyes, my own heart, all flatter me. Perhaps it is only to plunge me again more cruelly into the despair out of which I am just rescued." "You astonish me," replied I: "what reason can you have to doubt me? Ever since I knew you, though I might not be able to express myself intelligibly, surely all my actions have proved the love I bear you". "No," returned he, "I am not yet satisfied. In an interest, which so tenderly concerns me, my apprehensions are measured by my hopes. You do not speak French well enough to remove my just fears. I know you do not mean to deceive me: but explain to me what you understand by those
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adorable words, *I love you*. Speak; let my fate be decided: let me die at your feet with grief or with pleasure”.

“These words,” said I, a little alarmed at the animated manner in which he concluded; “these words, I think, should signify, that you are dear to me, that I am interested in your welfare, that friendship and gratitude attach me to you. These impressions are agreeable to my heart, and ought to content yours”. “Ah, *Zilia*,” answered he, “how is the ardour of your words abated! how cold, how cruel, do your accents grow! Is it too true, then, what *Celina* told me? Is it not for *Aza* that you feel all you have said?” “No,” replied I; “my love for *Aza* is of a very different nature from that I have for you. It is what you call love——what pain can this give you?” added I, seeing him turn pale and quit the grate, as he cast up his eyes to heaven in all the bitterness of anguish. “I love *Aza*, because *Aza* loves *Zilia*, and we are to be united. There are not, therefore, those endearing ties”——“the same,” exclaimed he, “as between you and him; save only, that my love is a thousand times greater than he ever felt.” “How,” replied

replied I, "is that possible? you are not of my nation. Far from having chosen me for your wife, accident alone brought us together; nay, it was not till to-day that we could freely communicate our thoughts to each other. What reason can you have, then, to entertain for me the affectionate regard you speak of?" "Need there any other", answered he, "than your charms and my own character, to attach me for ever to you? Naturally indolent and susceptible, and an enemy to artifice, the trouble it would have cost me to dive into the hearts of women and the fear of not finding in them the sincerity I wished, left me but a vague and transitory liking for them. I was a stranger to passion till the moment I beheld you. Your beauty surprised my heart; but, its impression had been as faint perhaps as that of many others, had not the sweetness and simplicity of your character presented to me the object, which my imagination had so often figured. You well know, *Zilia*, whether I have shewn a due respect for that object of my adoration. What did it not cost me to withstand the inviting and numberless opportunities, which the intercourse of a long voyage neces-

sarily afforded me! How often would your innocence have betrayed you to my transports, had I not repressed the ardour of my passion! But so far from harming you, or wounding your delicacy, I carried my discretion even to silence: nay, I enjoined my sister not to mention to you my attachment, desirous to owe every thing to yourself alone. Ah, *Zilia*! if you are not moved with so tender a respect, I will fly from you; though I am well persuaded, that my death will pay for the sacrifice." "Your death!" cried I, cut to the soul with the sincere affliction that oppressed him: "alas, sacrifice indeed! I know not if that of my own life would not be less dreadful." "Well then *Zilia*", resumed he, "if my life be dear to you, command me to preserve it." "What would you have me do?" said I. "To love me," he answered, "as you love *Aza*." "I love him always the same," replied I, "and shall continue to love him to the hour of my death. It is possible," added I, "that your laws permit you to love two objects in the same manner; but our customs, and my own heart, forbid it. Be satisfied with my gratitude
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and esteem: I cannot for a moment countenance your passion. I value truth, and tell it you without disguise." "With what indifference," cried he, "do you lacerate my soul! Ah, *Zilia*! how must I love you, since I adore even your cruel frankness! Well," continued he, after a few moments silence, "well, my love shall exceed your cruelty. Your happiness is dearer to me than my own. Speak on with that sincerity that racks me without mercy: What hopes have you as to the love which you cherish for *Aza*?" "Alas" said I, "my hopes are in you only." I then explained to him how I had heard, that a communication with the Indies was not impossible; that I flattered myself he would furnish me with the means of returning thither, or, be kind enough, at least, to convey to thee my knots, which would inform thee of my lot, and to put me in a way of receiving the answers, in order that being apprized of thy destiny, it might serve to govern mine.

"I will go", said he, with a constrained coldness, "and take the necessary means for discovering the fate of your lover: you shall be sat-

tified on that head. But you in vain indulge the hope of ever seeing again the happy *Aza*: insuperable obstacles divide you”.

These words, my dear *Aza*, were a death-blow to my heart. A torrent of tears gushed down my cheeks, which prevented me for some time from answering *Deterville*, who, on his part, observed a pensive silence. “Well,” said I, at last, “I shall see him then no more; but I will not cease to live for his dear sake. If your friendship is generous enough only to procure us some correspondence, this satisfaction will at least suffice to render my existence less insupportable; and I shall die content, if you will promise me to let him know, that I died loving him.”

“Ah! this is too much,” cried he, rising abruptly. “Yes, if it be possible, I will be the only victim. You shall know this heart which you disdain. You shall see what a love, as ardent and sincere as mine, is capable of performing: I will force you at least to pity me”

So saying, he flew from the grate, and left me in a situation I do not yet comprehend. I
continued

continued standing, with my eyes fixed upon the door at which *Deterville* went out, absorbed in a confusion of ideas, that I cared not to compose. I should have remained in this state much longer, had not *Celina* come into the parlour. She seemed surprised at finding me alone, and asked me abruptly, what made *Deterville* go away so soon. I did not conceal from her what had passed. At first she felt severely for, what she called, her brother's misfortune. Her grief afterwards turning to indignation, she loaded me with the bitterest reproaches, without my daring to open my lips. What could I indeed have said to her? My agitation left me scarcely the power even of thinking. I retired; she did not attempt to follow me. I remained a whole day shut up in my room, afraid to make my appearance, without hearing any news from a single soul, and in a distracted state of mind, which would not even suffer me to write to thee.

The displeasure of *Celina*, the affliction of her brother, the equivocal import of his last words, which I would, but dare not interpret

favourably, abandoned my soul alternately to the most cruel inquietudes.

I thought, at last, that the only way of calming them was to sit me down and communicate them to thee, to seek in thy tenderness the advice I require. This illusion supported me while I was writing; but alas, how transitory! My letter is finished, and the characters are traced only for myself. Thou art ignorant of my sufferings. Thou knowest not even whether I exist, whether I love thee. *Aza*, my dear *Aza*, wilt thou ever know it!

LETTER XXIV.

I MIGHT again, my dear *Aza*, call that time an absence, which is elapsed since I last wrote to thee.

Some days after the conversation I had with *Deterville*, I fell into a sickness, they term a *fièvre*. If, as I believe, it originally proceeded from the melancholy passions which then oppressed me, I doubt not it has been prolonged by a constant indulgence of sorrowful reflections, and the regret of having lost the friendship of *Celina*. Although she seemed affected at my illness, and took all possible care of me she could, it was with an air of such indifference, she had so little regard for my soul, that

I cannot but be satisfied of the-alteration in her sentiments. The extreme affection she has for her brother prejudices her against me. She is continually reproaching me with making him miserable. The shame of appearing ungrateful intimidates me ; the constrained civilities of *Celina* torment me ; my embarrassment renders her more cautious and reserved ; in short, confidence and harmony are banished our society.

Notwithstanding the many painful and distressing crosses I experience, on the part of both the brother and the sister, I am not insensible to the circumstances which alter their condition: *Deterville* has lost his mother. This unnatural mother has but too well confirmed her character. She has left all her property to her eldest son. It is hoped, however, that the lawyers will defeat the effect of this injustice. *Deterville*, regardless of his own interest, takes infinite pains to rescue the disconsolate *Celina* from oppression. Her unhappiness appears to increase his affection for her. Besides coming every day to see her, he writes to her night and morning. His letters are filled with such tender

der complaints against me, such a lively solicitude for my health, that although *Celina*, in reading them to me, would seem willing only to inform me of the progress of their affairs, I can easily discover her real motive.

Deterville, I have no doubt, writes them with a view, that the contents should be communicated to me. But I am sure he would not do it, if he knew what reproaches succeeded the reading of them. They make their impression on my heart : sorrow consumes me.

Hitherto struggling amidst storms, I enjoyed, at least, the poor satisfaction of living in peace with myself. Not a stain sullied the purity of my soul ; no remorse troubled it. I cannot now reflect, without feeling a sort of contempt for myself, that I have made two persons wretched to whom I owe my life ; that I have planted with thorns the pillows of my benefactors ; that I do them all the harm in my power, and yet I cannot, nor will I, cease to be criminal. My tenderness for thee triumphs over my remorse, *Aza*, how do I love thee !

LETTER XXV.



HOW prudence, my dear *Aza*, occasionally betrays us to our own prejudice ! I opposed, for some time, the pressing and repeated messages I received from *Deterville*, to grant him a moment's interview. Alas ! I shunned my own happiness. At length, less indeed through complaisance, than a weariness of *Celina's* importunity, I consented. On being led into the parlour, the dreadful alteration in *Deterville's* appearance, (who scarcely looks like the same person) startled and confounded me. I repented already of the step I had taken, and waited trembling the reproaches that I thought I deserved.

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Could I conceive he was about to fill my soul with pleasure?

“Pardon me, *Zilia*,” said he; “pardon the constraint I lay upon you. I would not have persisted in urging this interview, were I not the bearer of as much joy, as you have caused me uneasiness. Is one moment’s sight of you too much to ask, as a recompence for the cruel sacrifice I am come to make you?” and without giving me time to answer, “here is a letter,” continued he, “from the relation you mentioned. In apprizing you of *Aza*’s lot, it will prove to you more forcibly than all my protestations the excess and sincerity of my love.” He then read to me this letter. Ah, my dear *Aza*, could I hear it, and not expire with joy? It brings me the heavenly tidings that thou breathest, that thou art free, that thou livest in safety at the court of Spain. What unexpected felicity!

This dear, this adorable letter, is written by a man who knows thee, who sees thee, who speaks to thee: perhaps thine eyes were fixed for a moment on this precious paper! I could not take mine off it. I with difficulty suppressed the ef-
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fusions of joy that were ready to escape me. Tears of love flowed down my cheeks. Had I obeyed the impulse of my heart, I should a hundred times have interrupted *Deterville* to tell him all that my gratitude inspired ; but I did not forget, that my happiness would only have encreased his affliction. I disguised my transports : he saw nothing but my tears.

“Well, *Zilia*,” said he, after he had done reading. “I have kept my word. You are now acquainted with *Aza*’s situation. If this be not enough, what more would you have me do ? Command it without reserve. There is nothing you are not entitled to from my love, that may any ways contribute to your felicity.”

Though I might, indeed, have expected such unexampled kindness, from the confirmed magnanimity of *Deterville*, I cannot but acknowledge it surprised and affected me. My confusion ; for the moment, prevented me from answering him. I was fearful of heightening the grief of so generous a man. I endeavoured to find words to express the sincerity of my heart, without wounding the sensibility of his own ; but in vain : I was obliged to say something.

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“ My happiness,” said I, “ will never be unmixed, since I know not how to reconcile the duties of love with those of friendship. I would willingly regain both yours and *Celina*’s. I wish not to quit you. I would fain be the constant admirer of your virtues, and every hour of my life pay the tribute of gratitude I owe to your goodness. I am well aware, that in leaving two persons I so tenderly esteem, eternal regret will go with me : but”——“ What ! *Zilia*,” cried he, “ you will not surely leave us ? Ah ! I was not prepared for that fatal resolution. I want fortitude to support it. I was resigned to behold you here in the arms of my rival. The force of my reason, the delicacy of my love, had armed me against that mortal blow : I would have prepared it myself. But I cannot for a moment listen to a separation : I cannot give up the felicity of seeing you. No, you shall not go,” continued he with warmth : “ do not think of it. You abuse my tenderness. You tear without pity a heart devoted to love. *Zilia*, too cruel *Zilia*, witness my despair : you are the fatal cause. Alas ! what a bitter return for so ardent, so pure a passion ! ”

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“It is you,” said I, terrified with his resolution, “it is yourself who are to blame. You stain my soul by forcing it to be ungrateful: you desolate my heart by a fruitless sensibility. Do not, I beseech you in the name of friendship, do not tarnish a noble, an unparalleled generosity, by a despair, that would embitter the remainder of my days, without rendering yourself happy. Do not condemn in me the same passion you cannot conquer. Do not oblige me to upbraid you. Let me cherish your name; let me proclaim it in the remotest corners of the world, and make it revered by nations, the adorers of virtue.”

I know not how I pronounced these words, but *Deterville*, though his eyes were fixed upon me, did not appear to take the least notice. Absorbed within himself, he remained some time in profound meditation: for my part, I dared not interrupt him. We both observed an equal silence, till resuming his speech, “yes, *Zilia*,” said he, with a kind of composure, “yes, I feel, I acknowledge all my injustice. But who could resign with indifference the sight of so many charms? It is your pleasure: you shall

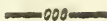
shall be obeyed. What a sacrifice ! Oh heaven ! My wretched days shall pass away, shall end without seeing you. At least if death—but no more of this,” added he, breaking off suddenly ; “ my weakness betrayed me. Allow me two days to collect myself ; I will then wait on you again. It is necessary we concert together the measures for your journey. Farewell, *Zilia* ! May the fortunate *Aza* taste the supreme felicity that awaits him !” So saying, he retired.

I confess to thee, my dear *Aza*, notwithstanding my esteem for *Deterville* ; though I sincerely sympathized in his affliction, I was too impatient to indulge the transports of my soul, not to rejoice at his departure. How delicious it is, after so much pain, to give one’s self up to joy ! I passed the rest of the day in the most tender raptures. I did not write to thee ; a letter had been too little for my heart : it would have revived thy absence, I saw thee ; I spoke to thee, dear *Aza*. What had been wanting to complete my happiness, hadst thou added to the precious letter I received, some pledges of thy tenderness ! How hap-
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pened it to escape thee ? They spoke to thee about me ; thou art not ignorant of my lot ; and nothing tells me of thy love. But, can I doubt thy heart ? My own is the pledge of its fidelity. Thou lovest me ; our felicity is mutual. Thou burnest with the same fires ; the same impatience consumes thee. Fly, fear ; fly, vain suspicion, from my soul : let confidence and joy reign in it unalloyed.—Yet, thou hast embraced the religion of that savage people. What is it ? Does it require thee to renounce my love, as that of France would have me renounce thine ? No ; thou wouldst have spurned it.

Be it as it may, my heart is subject to thy laws. Guided by the light of thy mind, I will implicitly adopt every thing, that may render us inseparable. What have I to fear ? Shortly re-united to my comfort, to my being, to my all, my every thought shall emanate from thee ; I will live only for thy sake.

LETTER XXVI.



THIS, my dear *Aza*, is destined to be the happy place of our meeting. My felicity daily encreases by its peculiar circumstances. The interview, which *Deterville* appointed, is just over. Whatever pleasure I had promised myself in surmounting the difficulties of the journey, in getting the start of thee, in flying to thy arms, I sacrifice it, without regret, to the joy of seeing thee the sooner.

Deterville so clearly proved to me, that thou couldst be here in less time than I could get to Spain, that although he generously left it to my choice, I did not hesitate a moment to forego my design. Every hour is of too much importance

importance to my heart, to be wantonly thrown away.

Before I decided, perhaps I should more maturely have weighed this advantage, but for some intelligence I gained with respect to my journey, which privately determined me to resolve as I have done, and which I cannot confide to any soul but thyself.

I recollected, that during our long route to Paris, *Deterville* gave pieces of silver, and sometimes of gold, at every place we stopped at. On my enquiring if this were involuntary, or whether it proceeded from pure liberality, I was told that in France, travellers were obliged to pay not only for their victuals, but even for their rest.* Alas! I have not the least portion of what would be requisite to satisfy the greediness of this mercenary people: all must have come from the hands of *Deterville*. But how could I persuade myself voluntarily to contract a kind of obligation, the shame of which closely borders on reproach? Impossible.

* The *Incas* established large houses upon the road, where all travellers were entertained free of expence.

ble. This reason alone was sufficient to determine me to remain here. The pleasure of seeing thee sooner only confirmed my resolution.

Deterville has written in my presence to the Spanish minister. He urges him to dismiss thee with a generosity that fills my soul with gratitude and admiration. O, what delicious moments did I pass while *Deterville* was writing! What a pleasure in concerting the arrangements for thy journey, in witnessing the preparations of my happiness, in the flattering conviction of its approach!

If it grieved me, at first, to relinquish my design of anticipating thee, I confess, my dear *Aza*, it has opened to me a thousand sources of delight, which I perceived not before. Many circumstances, that appeared too trifling to hasten or delay my departure, are now become interesting and agreeable. I implicitly pursued the bias of my heart. My impatience to pour its effusions into thine, to pay thee its homage, to devour the renewed protestations of thy love, entirely suspended the power of reflection. I forgot that I was going to seek the
idol

idol of my soul among those cruel Spaniards, who tore me from thee, and whose very idea seizes me with horror. I enjoy a satisfaction, as great as inexpressible, in cherishing the confidence of seeing them no more. The voice of love extinguished that of friendship : I taste, without remorse, the sweetness of uniting them. On the other hand, *Deterville* assures me, that we never must expect again to see the city of the Sun. Next to residing in our own dear country, can any one be found more agreeable than France ? I am sure thou wilt like it, *Aza*. Though sincerity is banished from it, though the hearts of the people will not bear investigation, here are so many charms to surprise and divert the mind, that they make one forget the dangers of society.

After what I have said of gold, I need not caution thee to bring some with thee. Thou wilt want no other recommendation. The smallest portion of thy treasures is sufficient to make thee astonish and confound the pride of the magnificent poor of this kingdom : thy virtues and thy sentiments will only be valued by *Deterville* and me. He has promised to convey
to

to thee my knots and my letters He told me thou wouldst find interpreters to explain to thee the latter — They are come for my packet. I must leave thee. Farewell dear hope of my life I will continue to write to thee. If I cannot send my letters, I will keep them for thee. How could I support the length of thy journey, were I to deprive myself of the only means I have of conversing with my joy, my transports, my felicity?

LETTER XXVII.



KNOWING my letters to be on the road, my dear *Aza*, I enjoy a tranquillity to which I was a stranger. I am for ever thinking of the pleasure thou wilt feel in receiving them. I behold thy transports: I participate in them. My soul admits none but agreeable impressions; and to complete my joy, harmony is restored in our little society.

The judges have ordered the property to be returned to *Celina*, which she had been so unnaturally deprived of by her mother. She sees her lover every day. Her marriage is only delayed by some necessary preparations that are making for it. Thus happy in the completion

pletion of her wishes, she thinks no more of quarrelling with me; and I feel my obligation to her just as great, as if I owed to her friendship the renewal of her kindness. Whatever be the reason, we are always beholden to those, who inspire us with a pleasing sensation.

This morning, she made me fully sensible of all its value by a condescension, which relieved me from a state of the most painful solicitude, and restored to my mind an agreeable tranquillity.

A person brought her a prodigious quantity of stuffs, garments, and trinkets of all sorts. She ran into my apartment, took me into hers, and after consulting me upon the different beauties of so many dresses, she put together a parcel with her own hands of such as had most attracted my attention, and ordered our *Chinas* to take them instantly into my room, which I opposed with all my might. My resistance, at first, only served to divert her; but seeing that she persisted the more for my refusal, I could no longer repress my feelings. "Why," said I, with my eyes bathed with tears, "why will you thus continue to debase me? To you I owe life, and

all I possess. It is more than enough not to forget my misfortunes. I am well aware, that according to your laws, when benefits are not wanted by those who receive them, the shame is extinguished. Know then, I have no longer occasion for the exercise of your bounty. It is not without reluctance," added I, in a milder tone, "that I am obliged to comply with prejudices so repugnant to nature. Our customs are more humane. With us, the receiver is no less respected than the giver. You have taught me to think otherwise. Is not this, then, offering me an insult?"

This amiable friend, more affected with my tears, than provoked by my reproaches, answered me in a tone of tenderness: "Far be it, my dear *Zilia*, from my brother's wish or mine to wound your delicacy. It would ill become us to affect munificence towards you. A little time will convince you of it. I only meant you to partake with me the presents of a generous brother; this being the most acceptable and certain way of shewing him my gratitude. Custom, situated as I am, justified my offering them: but, since they give offence to you, I will say no more

more about them.” “You promise me then?” said I. “Yes,” replied she with a smile, “if you will permit me to write a line to *Deterville*’?” I consented; and peace and cheerfulness were restored between us.

We had begun again to examine her dresses more minutely, when she was called into the parlour. She would fain have taken me with her: but, my dear *Aza*, what amusement can I enjoy, equal to that of writing to my love? So far from desiring any other, I anticipate with regret, the approaching celebration of *Celina*’s wedding.

She wants me to quit the religious house, and live with her when she is married: but, to confess the truth————

Aza, my dear *Aza*, by what an agreeable surprise was my letter yesterday interrupted! Alas! I had given up, as lost for ever, those precious monuments of our ancient splendor. I had abandoned all hopes of seeing them again: I thought no more of them. Canst thou believe it? I am even now surrounded with them. I see them; I touch them, and yet scarcely can believe my own eyes and my hands.

While I was writing to thee, *Celina* came into my room, followed by four men, bending under the weight of massy chests. They put them down and retired. These, I concluded, were fresh presents from *Deterville*. I began already murmuring to myself, when *Celina*, giving me some keys, said: "Open, *Zilia*; do not be alarmed, but open: they come from *Aza*." I believed it. What can repress, at the sound of thy name, the impatience of my heart? I opened with haste. My astonishment confirmed my error, on finding myself surrounded with the well-known ornaments of the Temple of the Sun.

A confused sensation of sorrow and of joy, pleasure and regret, took possession of my soul. I prostrated myself before these sacred relics of our altars. I covered them with pious kisses: I watered them with my tears: I could not tear myself away from them: I forgot even the presence of *Celina*, who roused me from my trance, by giving me a letter which she begged of me to read. Still the willing victim to my error, I thought it was thy hand: my transports redoubled. But, although I made it out with some difficulty,

difficulty, I very soon discovered that it came from *Deterville*. It will be easier, my dear *Aza*, for me to copy it, than explain to thee its contents.

DETERVILLE'S LETTER.

‘THESE treasures, fair *Zilia*, belong to you, since I found them in the ship that brought you over. Some disputes, which arose amongst the crew, prevented me till now from the liberty of disposing of them. I would willingly have presented them myself; but the uneasiness you betrayed this morning to my sister leaves me no alternative. I could not too soon dissipate your fears. I shall ever while I live sacrifice my own happiness to yours.’

I confess with a blush, my dear *Aza*, that I was less sensible, at that moment, of *Deterville*’s generosity, than of the pleasure which I felt in convincing him of mine. I immediately set apart a vase, that had fallen by chance, rather than avarice, into the hands of the Spaniards.

It is the same (my heart knew it again) which thy lips touched on that memorable day, when thou fain wouldst taste some *Aca*,* prepared with my hands. Richer in this treasure than all they had restored to me, I called the men who brought them. I would willingly have sent them back as a present to *Deterville*; but *Celina* opposed my wishes.

“How unjust are you, *Zilia*!” said she. “Would you have my brother accept of immense riches? you, who are offended at the offer of a trifle? Recal to mind your own equity, if you would inspire it in others.”

These words pierced my very soul. I feared there was more ostentation and revenge, than generosity in my action. How nearly are vices allied to virtues! I confessed my fault, and asked *Celina*'s pardon. But I suffered too much from the constraint she would impose upon me, not to endeavour to relieve my anxiety. “Do not punish me,” said I, with an air of timidity, “as much as I deserve. Do not disdain to accept some specimens of the work of our unhappy

* A drink of the Indians.

happy country. You have no need of them ; my request, therefore, ought not to offend you."

While I was speaking, *Celina's* attention was fixed on two golden shrubs, covered with insects and birds inimitably wrought. I immediately presented them to her, together with a little silver basket, which I filled with shells, fish, and the choicest flowers I could pick out. She accepted them with a goodness that transported me.

I then selected various idols of different nations subjugated* by thy ancestors, and a little statue† representing a Virgin of the Sun. To these I added a tiger, a lion, and other courageous animals, and requested her to send them to *Deterville*. "Write to him then", said she smiling: "without a letter under your hand, the presents might be ill received."

L

* These idols were deposited in the Temple, after the *Incas* had obliged the vanquished to embrace the worship of the Sun. They themselves were not without their idols, the *Inca-Huyana* having consulted that of Rimace.

† The *Incas* adorned their houses with golden statues of all sizes, even those of giants.

I was too much pleased to refuse any thing. I wrote all that my gratitude inspired; and when *Celina* went out of the room, I gave a few trifles to both her *China* and mine: some I put by for my writing-master. I tasted, at length, the delicious satisfaction of giving.

Nor was this done without distinction, my dear *Aza*. All that comes from thee; all that is nearly connected with thy remembrance, I preserve in my own hands.

The golden chair,* that was kept in the Temple for the visiting days of the *Capa-Inca*, thy august father, placed on one side of my chamber in the form of a throne, represents to me thy greatness, and the supremacy of thy rank. The large image of the Sun, (which I myself beheld sacrilegiously dragged out of the Temple by the perfidious Spaniards,) suspended above, excites my veneration. I prostrate myself before it: I adore it with my mind; but my heart is wholly thine. The two palm-trees, which thou gavest to the Sun, as an offering and a pledge of the fidelity thou hadst sworn to me,

placed

* The *Incas* always sat on chairs of massy gold.

placed on each side of the throne, recal to my remembrance thy tender protestations. Flowers and birds,* judiciously disposed in every corner of my room, represent in miniature those magnificent gardens, where I have so often indulged thy fond idea. Every thing that meets my delighted eyes revives in my mind thy affectionate regard, my joy, my felicity, yea all that will ever constitute the life of my life.

* It has been already observed, that the gardens of the Temple, and those of the royal palaces, were filled with all sorts of imitations in gold and silver. The Peruvians imitated even the plant, called *Mays*, of which they formed entire fields.

LETTER XXVIII.



I COULD not oppose, my dear *Aza*, the importunities of *Celina*. We have been now two days at her country-house, where her nuptials were celebrated on our arrival.

With what violence and regret was I torn from my solitude! Scarcely had I time to enjoy the sight of those precious ornaments, which rendered it so dear to me, than I was forced to quit them: and for how long? Alas! I know not.

The festivity and pleasures, that seem to intoxicate every one, recal with more anxiety those peaceful hours, which I passed in writing to, or, at least, in thinking of thee; and yet
I

I never met with objects so new, so surprising, and so well calculated to divert me : while with the tolerable knowledge I now have of the language of the country, I could acquire information, equally useful and entertaining, as to every thing that passes, if the noise and bustle would leave to any one the leisure to answer my questions. Hitherto, however, I have not found a soul who has had that civility, and I am no less at a loss, than when I first arrived in France.

The dresses of both the men and the women are so splendid, and so loaded with useless ornaments ; they both express themselves with such rapidity, that my attention to their discourse prevents me from seeing them ; and that I employ in looking at them prevents me from listening to them. I remain in a kind of stupor, which would doubtless afford them a great deal of amusement, had they time to notice it : but they are so wrapt up in themselves, that my amazement escapes them. It is but too true, my dear *Aza*, I here behold prodigies, whose sources are far beyond my comprehension.

I will say nothing to thee of the beauty of this house, which is almost as large as a town; decorated like a temple, and abounding in a variety of agreeable bagatelles of such little use, that I cannot help thinking, the French have chosen superfluity for the object of their worship. They dedicate the arts to it, which, although they affect only to imitate nature, are infinitely superior; and the manner, in which they apply her productions, frequently appears to surpass her own. They collect together in their gardens, and almost in one glance, the beauties which she scatters with so frugal a hand over the surface of the earth; while the obsequious elements seem to interpose obstacles to their enterprises, only to render their triumphs the more brilliant.

One sees the astonished earth cherish and rear in her bosom the plants of the remotest climates, of no real service, of no apparent utility, than that of obeying the arts, and decking the idol of superfluity.

Water, so easy to divide, and which only seems to have consistence by the vessels that contain it; water, which naturally inclines to
all

all sorts of declivities, presents itself here shooting up into the air with a surprising velocity, without guide, without assistance, by virtue of its own force, and for no other use than to gratify the eye

Fire, my dear *Aza*, I have seen fire, that terrible element, forsaking its destructive power, and implicitly directed by a superior influence, assume all kinds of forms prescribed to it: sometimes representing a vast picture of light upon a sky obscured by the absence of the Sun: at others, shewing us that divine star descended upon the earth with his fires, his activity, and dazzling light; in short, in a splendor which deceives the sight and the judgment together. What art, my dear *Aza*! what men! what genius! I forget all that I have heard, all that I have seen of their littleness. I fall back involuntarily into my former admiration.

LETTER XXIX.



IT is not without sincere regret, my dear *Aza*, that my admiration of the French genius, is converted into a contempt of the use which they make of it. I felt a real pleasure in paying a just tribute to the merits of this charming nation, but I cannot be blind to the conviction of its faults.

The tumult has at length subsided. I have been able to make inquiries, and obtain answers. You have only to ask here, and they tell you more than you want to know. It is with a freedom and facility beyond all belief, that the French reveal the secrets of the perversity of their manners. Ask them ever so little, there
requires.

requires neither subtilty nor penetration to discover, that their inordinate passion for every thing superfluous has corrupted their reason, their heart, and their understanding; that it has established imaginary riches upon the ruins of what is needful; that it has substituted a superficial politeness for good manners, and supplies sterling good sense and reason by the tinsel of the mind.

The reigning vanity of the French is to appear rich. Their understanding, the arts, and perhaps the sciences, every thing partakes of ostentation: every thing conspires to the ruin of their fortunes; and as if the fertility of their genius had not resources sufficient to multiply the objects, I learn from themselves, that, regardless of the substantial and agreeable commodities that France abounds in, they procure, at a great expence, from all parts of the world, brittle and useless articles, which not only constitute the ornament of their houses, and the splendid dresses that they wear, but the very liquors and meats that compose their repasts.

Perhaps, my dear *Aza*, I might look over these extravagancies, had the French sufficient treasures

treasures to support them; or if they would satisfy their prodigality by applying only what was left, after having made their families comfortable and independent.

Our laws, the wisest ever given to men, allow of certain decorations in every degree, which distinguish descent or riches, and which could not, properly speaking, be called superfluity. This alone, then, is the source of their depraved imagination : this it is, which cannot be sustained without a violation of justice and humanity, and that appears to me a crime : in a word, it is this, which the French make their god, and to which they sacrifice their tranquillity and their honour.

There is, throughout the whole nation, only one class of citizens, that is capable of carrying the worship of the idol to the highest degree of splendor, without being deficient in some necessary duty. The quality would imitate them; but they are only the martyrs of that religion. What pain, what perplexity, what labour, to support an expenditure beyond their income ! There are a few of the nobles, who use more diligence, artifice, and fraud, in order to distinguish themselves

selves by frivolous extravagancies, than their ancestors displayed prudence, valour, and patriotism, to illustrate their own name.

And do not think I am deceiving thee, my dear *Aza*; daily do I hear, with indignation, young people disputing among themselves the glory of having used the most subtilty and adroitness, in the methods they employ to obtain the superfluities with which they adorn themselves, from the hands of those, who work only to acquire the means of subsistence.

In what a despicable light would not such men persuade me to consider the whole nation; did I not know, that the French, in other respects, more frequently err for the want of having a just notion of things, than a want of integrity. Their natural volatility almost uniformly precludes all rational discourse. With them, nothing is grave, nothing is of moment. Perhaps none of them ever took the trouble to reflect on the disgraceful consequences of their conduct. It is necessary to appear rich: it is a fashion, a habit, and they follow it. One inconvenience arises, which they get over by an injustice:

injustice : they think only of triumphing over one difficulty ; but the illusion goes much further.

In the generality of houses, indigence and superfluity are separated only by one apartment. They both partake the occupations of the day, but in a very different manner. In the morning, in the interior of the cabinet, the voice of poverty is announced by the mouth of a man, who is paid to find the means of reconciling it with false opulence. Chagrin and caprice preside at these conversations, which commonly conclude by the sacrifice of necessities, which they offer up at the shrine of superfluity. The remainder of the day, after having taken another dress, another apartment, and almost another being, dazzled with their own splendor, they become gay, they call themselves happy ; nay, they even go so far as to fancy themselves rich.

I have however remarked, that some of those, who display their new magnificence with the greatest affectation, do not forget their real characters. Then they are witty upon their own indigence. They facetiously insult the memory

mory of their ancestors. whose wise economy was satisfied with useful clothing, and with ornaments and commodities, suited to their income, rather than their birth. Their families, they say, and their domesticks, enjoyed a frugal and honest plenty. They portioned their daughters: they established on a solid basis an independence for their heirs, and left, in reserve, something to repair the misfortunes of a friend, or relieve a distressed object.

Shall I tell thee, my dear *Aza*? notwithstanding the ridiculous aspect, under which they presented to me the manners of past times, they charmed me so much, I found in them such a resemblance to the simplicity of our own, that absorbed in the illusion, my heart beat at every circumstance, as if I had expected, at the end of the recital, to find myself surrounded by our own dear citizens. But, at the first applauses I bestowed on these excellent and wise customs, the bursts of laughter which I drew upon me, convinced me of my error; and I found myself surrounded only by a race of senseless and degenerate French, who vainly make a boast of their depraved imagination.

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The same principle of corruption, which has converted the substantial commodities of France into useless bagatelles, has rendered no less superficial the bonds of their society. I have been told by the most esteemed amongst them, who lament this depravity, that formerly, as with us, gentleness was in the soul, and humanity in the heart: This may be possible: but at present, what they call politeness supplies the place of sensibility. It consists in a multiplicity of words without meaning, of obsequiousness without esteem, of solicitude without affection.

In the great houses, a servant is employed to discharge the duties of society. He goes quite a journey every day, to say to one, that his master and mistress are concerned for his health; to another, that they sincerely condole in his affliction, or, that they rejoice at his felicity. When he returns, they pay no attention to the answers he brings back. It is mutually understood to keep up the form, and leave all interest entirely out of the question: and this ceremony passes for friendship.

Marks.

Marks of respect they pay in person, and which, indeed, they carry to a degree of childishness. I should be ashamed to give thee a few instances, were it not necessary to inform thee of every thing that concerns so singular a nation. It were a breach of respect towards their superiors, and even their equals, if after dinner, (which they come to take familiarly with them) they should satisfy the wants of a pressing thirst, without first asking as many excuses as permissions. They are not to suffer their clothes to touch those of persons of distinction; and it were a rudeness to look at them attentively, but infinitely worse not to look at them at all. It would require more knowledge, and a better memory than I have, to relate all the frivolities that pass between them for marks of consideration, and which they would fain call esteem.

As to the abundance of words, thou wilt one day learn, my dear *Aza*, that exaggeration, uttered and disavowed in the same breath, is the inexhaustible source of French conversation. They seldom fail to add a superfluous compliment to one already paid, with the intention of
 proving,

proving, that they pay none at all. It is with the most extravagant flattery, that they protest the sincerity of the praises which they lavish on you ; and they enforce their protestations of affection and esteem by such a multiplicity of unmeaning terms, that it is impossible to arrive at the sentiment they would convey.

O, my dear *Aza*, how truly insipid must my diffidence of speaking, and the simplicity of my words, appear to these people ! Nor do I think my mind is held in more estimation by them. To deserve in this instance some credit, it is necessary to evince a great promptitude and sagacity, in catching the different significations of words, and perverting their use. It is necessary to engage their attention by the subtilty of thoughts, frequently impenetrable, or to conceal their obscurity under an exuberance of frivolous expressions. I have read in one of their best authors : “ *that the spirit of the beau-monde consists in saying nothings with an agreeable air ; in entirely excluding all rational discourse, if it cannot be excused by the graces of speech ;*

*speech; in short, in disguising reason, when they are obliged to introduce it.”**

What language could I use more effectually to convince thee, that reason and good sense, which are considered as the essential qualities of the mind, are held in equal contempt here with every thing that is useful? In fine, my dear *Aza*, it is an indisputable truth, that superfluity reigns in France with so sovereign a sway, that a man, with but an easy independency, is poor; he, who possesses only virtue, contemptible; and he, who has only good sense, a mere fool.

* *Considérations sur les mœurs du Siècle, par M. DUCLOS.*

END OF VOL. I.

PERUVIAN LETTERS,

INCLUDING

THE LETTERS OF AZA.

FROM THE FRENCH

OF

MADAME DE GRAFIGNY.

TRANSLATED BY

R. L. WHITEHEAD, ESQ.

BARRISTER AT LAW, OF THE HONOURABLE SOCIETY,
INNER TEMPLE.



IN TWO VOLUMES:

— *Quis talia fando*
Temperet a lachrymis? VIRG. ÆN.

VOL. II.



London :

Printed by T. Jones, Chapel-Street, Soho,
FOR THE TRANSLATOR;

And published by HATCHARD, Bookseller to her Majesty, 190,
Piccadilly; BELL, 148, Oxford-street; OSTELL, 3,
Ave-Maria-Lane; JULIEN & Co Soho-square;
and THOMSON & SON, Manchester.

1805.

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PERUVIAN LETTERS.



LETTER XXX.



THE prevailing character of the French, my dear *Aza*, hurries them so naturally into extremes, that *Deterville*, although free from the generality of the faults peculiar to his nation, is not exempt from this. Not satisfied with keeping his word never for the future to name to me his passion, he studiously avoids me : so that, notwithstanding we are obliged to be continually in each other's presence, I have not yet had an opportunity of speaking to him.

Although the company is always very numerous and chearful, a constant melancholy reigns upon his countenance. It is easy to

perceive, that it is not without a most painful struggle, he submits to the restraint which he has imposed upon himself. I ought to value him perhaps for it: but I have so many questions to ask him, upon subjects, alas! that so tenderly concern me, that I cannot, in my heart, pardon his seeming disposition to avoid me.

I would fain consult him about the letter which he sent to Spain, and whether he thinks it is yet arrived. I wish to know precisely the time of thy departure, and how long thou wilt be in coming, in order to ascertain the hour of my happiness. A hope, well founded, is a real good: but, my dear *Aza*, it becomes most precious, when we can determine the period of its completion.

None of the diversions, which occupy the company, afford me the least amusement: they are too noisy for my soul. I enjoy no longer *Celina's* conversation. Wholly taken up with her new husband, I can scarcely find an opportunity of paying her the dues of friendship: The rest of the company is so far only agreeable, as they furnish me with the means of
satisfying

satisfying my curiosity, in respect to the variety of objects that excite it. Thus, frequently alone in the midst of gaiety and dissipation, my thoughts are the only amusements I enjoy. They are all thine, dear friend of my heart. Thou shalt ever be the only confident of my soul, my pleasures, and my troubles.

LETTER XXXI.

I WAS greatly to blame, my dear *Aza*, for so anxiously wishing a conversation with *Derterville*. Alas! he hath said but too much to me. Though conscious of my own innocence, the painful inquietudes he excited in my soul are by no means composed.

A certain impatience, which I cannot well describe, was yesterday added to my accustomed melancholy. The world and its noise became more irksome to me than usual. Even the mutual felicity of *Celina* and her husband, in short, every thing I saw, inspired me with an indignation approaching to contempt. Blushing for shame to find such unjust and base sentiments

ments in my heart, I retired, in order to conceal my agitation, into the remotest part of the garden.

Scarce had I seated myself at the foot of a tree, than the tears involuntarily flowed down my cheeks. With my face covered with my hands, I was so deeply absorbed in thought, that *Deterville* was kneeling by the side of me, before I perceived him.

“Be not offended, *Zilia*,” said he: “chance has alone brought me to your feet; I was not seeking you. Harassed with noise and confusion, I came to indulge in this peaceful retreat the troubles of my soul. I saw you; I struggled to avoid you: but my wretched situation betrayed me to seek some interval of relief. In pity to myself I approached you. I found you in tears. My sensibility overpowered me. Yet, command me from your presence, and you shall be obeyed. Have you the heart to do it? Am I hateful to you, *Zilia*?” “No,” said I; “on the contrary, sit down. I am happy in the opportunity which this accident affords me of explaining myself.

Since your last favours"——"Not a word of that," cried he, suddenly interrupting me. "Hold," replied I, interrupting him in my turn; "to be compleatly generous, you must listen to the voice of gratitude. I have not spoken to you, since you restored to me the precious ornaments of the Temple, wherein I was educated. Perhaps in my letter to you, I did not properly express the sentiments, with which such a noble generosity inspired me. I fain"——"Alas!" exclaimed he, interrupting me again, "what a wretched relief is gratitude to an afflicted heart! The constant companion of indifference, it is too often associated with hatred."

"How!" cried I, in a tone of indignation: "Ah, *Deterville*! what reproaches would you not deservedly provoke from me, were you not, indeed, so greatly to be pitied! So far from being the object of my aversion, I have felt less reluctance from the moment I first saw you, in owing every thing to your bounty, than to the hands of the cruel Spaniards. Your complacency and kindness made me all along solicitous to conciliate your friendship. The more I became acquainted with your character, the more was I confirmed

confirmed in my opinion of your claim to my confidence and esteem. How, therefore, (without saying a word of the extreme obligations I am under to you, since my gratitude gives offence) how could I help feeling those sentiments of admiration, which are so justly your due?

“Your virtues I found alone worthy the simplicity of ours. Your sentiments would do honour to a child of the Sun. Your reason is almost that of nature. How many inducements, then, had I to esteem you! Even the gracefulness of your person, nay every thing about you charms me. Friendship has eyes as well as love. Formerly, if you were away from me but for a moment, I never saw you return without experiencing a certain serenity in my heart. Why have you changed these innocent gratifications into pains and embarrassments?

“Your reason no longer appears without constraint: I am in perpetual dread of its eruptions. In listening to the tender effusions of your heart, prudence restrains the expression of my own. You deprive me of the pleasure of telling you, without disguise, the real delight I should take in your friendship, did you not dis-

turb its tranquillity. You even deprive me of the grateful satisfaction of looking on my benefactor. Your eyes confuse mine. I no more observe in them that agreeable serenity, which at times used to penetrate the recesses of my soul. I remark upon your countenance a pensive melancholy, which continually upbraids me as the cause. Ah, *Deterville*, how do you wrong me, if you imagine, that you are the only sufferer!"

"My dear *Zilia*," cried he, kissing my hand with rapture, "how does your candour and generosity augment my affliction! What a treasure were the possession of a heart like yours! but oh! with what despair do you make me feel the loss of it! Mighty *Zilia*," continued he, "how vast is your empire! Was it not enough to plunge me from complete and contented indifference into the most ardent love? from apathy into insupportable distraction? Must you extend the conquest of your charms by betraying even the passions, which those charms excited? Can I sustain it?" "Yes," said I: "this struggle is worthy of you, and of your heart. This just, this noble action exalts you above mortals."

tal's." "But can I survive it?" resumed he pitifully. "Do not expect, however, that I will serve as a victim to the triumph of your lover. I will go far from you, and adore in solitude your heavenly idea. It shall be the bitter nourishment of my heart. I will love you: I will see you no more. Ah! do not——do not at least forget"——

His sobs spoke the rest. He hastened to conceal the tears that streamed down his face. I shed some myself. Equally affected at his grief and generosity, I took one of his hands, and locking it in mine, "no," said I, "you shall not go. Be persuaded, my friend: let me for ever admire and esteem you. Content yourself with that. I love you, indeed, almost as much as I love *Aza*; but I never can love you as I do him".

"Cruel *Zilia*!" cried he, with an agitated air: "will you always accompany your goodness with such piercing strokes? Shall a deadly poison continually destroy the charm, that you diffuse over your words? How foolish am I in yielding to their sweetness! To what a shameful humiliation do I sink myself?—It is

done : I am again myself," added he in a firm tone. " Farewell : you shall very soon see *Aza*. Heaven grant, that you may never experience from him the torments I suffer ! May he be every thing you wish, and worthy of your heart !"

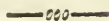
What apprehensions, my dear *Aza*, did the manner in which he pronounced these last words excite in my soul ! A thousand suspicions involuntarily rushed into my mind. I had no doubt, that *Deterville* knew more than he was willing to communicate ; that he withheld from me some letters, which he might possibly have received from Spain ; in short, dare I avow it ? that thou wert—— inconstant !

I earnestly entreated him to inform me of the whole truth ; but I could get from him nothing but equivocal conjectures, equally calculated to confirm and remove my apprehensions. Yet the reflections he made on the inconstancy of men, on the dangers of absence, and the facility with which thou hadst changed thy religion, struck a damp over my soul.

For the first time in my life, my love became a painful sensation : for the first time, I was
fearful

fearful of losing thy heart. *Aza*, were it too true, didst thou not really love me—but ah! never let so foul a suspicion contaminate the purity of my soul. No: I alone should be to blame, could I suffer myself for a moment to indulge that thought, unworthy of my candour, of thy virtue, of thy constancy. No; it was despair, that suggested to *Deterville* these horrible ideas. Ought not his anxiety, and his distracted state of mind, sufficiently to prove it? Ought not that interest, which prompted me to speak, make me suspect him? Surely, my dear *Aza*. I could not repress my indignation. I treated him with harshness. He quitted me in distraction. *Aza*, so tenderly as I love thee—no, thou never canst forget me.

LETTER XXXII.



HOW long is thy journey, my dear *Aza*! How ardently do I wait thy arrival! The period seems to me more uncertain, than I had at first considered it; and yet, I studiously avoid putting the least question to *Deterville* upon the subject. I cannot pardon him for the ill-opinion he entertains of thy heart. My idea of his own greatly lessens the compassion which I felt for his sufferings, and the regret of being in a manner separated from him.

We have been at Paris for this fortnight. I reside with *Celina* at her husband's house, which is so far distant from her brother's, as to prevent the necessity of my constantly seeing him.

He

He frequently dines with us; but *Celina's* time and mine is so entirely taken up, that he has not an opportunity to speak with me in private.

Since our return, we employ a part of the day in the painful fatigue of dressing, and the rest, in what they call, *paying visits*.

These two occupations would appear to me as useless as they are troublesome, did not the latter afford me the means of making further discoveries in the manners of the country. On my arrival in France, being entirely unacquainted with the language, I could judge only from appearances. It was not till I was placed in the religious house, that I began to understand it. Thou knowest I found there but little to improve me: and in the country, I saw only a kind of private society. It is at present, that by an intercourse with what is called the *polite world*, I see the whole nation, and can make my remarks without any difficulty.

The ceremony of our visits consists in calling in a day at as great a number of houses as possible, to interchange compliments upon the beauty of the face and person, and the excellence of the taste displayed in each other's dress

dress ; but not a syllable is ever uttered about the attributes of the soul.

I soon discovered the reason why they took so much pains to acquire this vain and contemptible homage. It arises from the necessity of receiving it in person ; and yet it is but momentary. They no sooner disappear, than it assumes another form. The charms that were distinguished in her who goes out, serve only to establish, by a contemptuous comparison, the pretensions of her who follows.

Censure is the prevailing passion of the French, as inconsistency is the characteristic of the nation. Their books are a general critique upon manners, and their conversation that upon each individual, at least if they are absent : then it is, they say freely all the ill they think of them, and sometimes even that, which they never think at all. The best among them are led away by custom, and are distinguished only by a certain formal apology for their candour and love of truth. This done, they do not scruple to expose the foibles, the follies, and even the vices of their friends.

As .

As the sincerity, which the French use to one another, is without exception, so their mutual confidence is without bounds. There needs neither eloquence in order to be listened to, nor integrity to be believed. Every thing is said, every thing admitted, with equal facility.

Yet do not imagine, my dear *Aza*, that the French, in general, are born with all their faults. I should be more unjust than themselves not to undeceive thee.

Naturally tender, and susceptible of virtuous impressions, I never met with one of them, who could listen, unmoved, to the description which they frequently oblige me to give them of the rectitude of our hearts, the ingenuousness of our sentiments, and the simplicity of our manners. If they lived amongst us, they would certainly become virtuous. Custom and example are the tyrants of their conduct.

He, who thinks well of a person that is absent, slanders him to avoid the contempt of the company : another would be honest, humane, and affable, but for the fear of appearing ridiculous : and a third is ridiculous by choice, who would
be

be a pattern of perfection, had he the spirit to assert his worth.

In short, my dear *Aza*, generally speaking, their vices are just as artificial as their virtues; while the insignificance of their character suffers them to be but imperfectly what they are. Like certain toys they give their children, they are a shapeless imitation of thinking beings: they appear to have weight, are light to the touch, have a painted outside, an inside without form, an apparent value, but no real worth. They are accordingly looked upon by other nations, merely as agreeable bagatelles are in society. Good sense smiles at their pretty ways, and coldly bestows them in their proper place.

Happy the nation which has nature only for its guide, truth for its basis, and virtue for its principle!

LETTER XXXIII.

IT is no wonder, my dear *Aza*, that inconsistency is a consequence of the airy character of the French : but it astonishes me beyond measure, that, with as much or more sagacity than any other nation, they seem not to be sensible of the glaring absurdities, which strangers remark in them at first sight.

Among the great number of those which daily strike me, I see none more disgraceful to their understanding, than their ideas in regard to women. They pay them all possible respect, my dear *Aza*, and despise them at the same moment with equal excess.

The

The first law of their politeness, or their virtue, if thou wilt, (for I have not yet discovered they have any other) concerns the women. The man of the highest rank owes a certain degree of respect to a woman of the meanest: He would be covered with shame, and with what they call *ridicule*, if he offered her a personal insult: and yet a man of the least consideration and esteem may deceive and betray a woman of merit, may blacken her character with the foulest calumnies, without the apprehension of either shame or punishment.

Were I not assured, that thou wilt very soon be able to judge for thyself, how could I venture to relate to thee absurdities, which the simplicity of our minds is scarcely capable of conceiving? Docile to the notions of nature, our genius extends not beyond it. To us it appeared, that the strength and courage, peculiar to one sex, designed it for the aid and protection of the other; and our laws are conformable to that opinion.* Here, far from compassionating the weakness of women, those of the lower orders

* The laws excused the women from all laborious employments.

orders; though sinking under the fatigue of a laborious occupation, are afforded no relief by their husbands or the laws. Those of a higher rank, the sport of the artifice or wickedness of men, have no other reparation for the effects of their perfidies, than the outside shew of an imaginary respect, which is constantly succeeded by the sharpest satire.

On my entering into the world, I plainly remarked, that the habitual slander of this nation fell principally upon the women; and that the men were particularly tender of shewing the least slight to one another. I was endeavouring to find the reason of it in their good qualities, when I discovered it by an accident in their bad ones.

In every house we have gone into for the last two days, an account has been given us of the death of a young man, who was killed by one of his friends; and they countenance this barbarous action, merely because the deceased had said something to the prejudice of the survivor: This extravagance appeared to me of so serious a cast, as to demand the most minute investigation. I found upon enquiry, my dear *Aza*,
that

that a man is obliged to expose his own life, in order to take away that of another, if he hears, that this other has been defaming his character; or to banish himself from society, if he refuses to take so cruel a revenge. This was more than sufficient to satisfy me on the subject. It is evident, that the men, naturally cowards, and insensible to the feelings of shame and remorse; are only afraid of corporal punishments; and that if the women had the power of chastising the insults which are offered them, in the same manner, as the men are forced to resent the most trifling affront, many, who are now received and welcomed in society, would be no longer in existence; or, exiled in a desert, they would hide from the world their shame and their villany.

Insolence and audacity entirely govern the young men, especially when they have nothing to risk. The motives, which actuate their conduct towards the women, require no further elucidation; but I cannot yet account for that inward contempt, which they almost universally seem to have for them. I will endeavour

your

your to learn the cause of it : my own interest, indeed, is immediately concerned.

Oh, my dear *Aza*, what would be my feelings, if, at thy arrival, they should say the things of me, which I hear them say of others!

LETTER XXXIV.



IT has cost me, my dear *Aza*, a great deal of time, to investigate the cause of that contempt, which the French, in general, entertain for women. I have at last, I think, discovered it in the little resemblance there is between what they really are, and what it is conceived they ought to be. Here, as in other nations, they would fain see them distinguished for merit and for virtue. But nature must have endowed them with it; for the education that is given them is so contrary to the end proposed, that it appears to me the chef-d'œuvre of French inconsistency.

It

It is understood at Peru, my dear *Aza*, that to form mankind for the practice of virtue, it is necessary, from their childhood, to instil into them a courage, and a certain firmness of soul, which constitute a determined character. They know nothing of this in France. The children here, in their earliest infancy, seem designed only for the amusement of the parents, and those who have the care of them. It appears as if they wished to take a shameful advantage of their tender minds, and their incapacity to distinguish what is true from what is false. They deceive them in things which they do not see. They give them wrong ideas of what presents itself to their senses, and then inhumanly laugh at their mistakes. They excite their sensibility and their natural weakness by a puerile compassion for the little accidents that happen to them: in short, they forget that they are one day to be men.

I know not what are the effects of the education, which a father gives his son, having never been informed of them: but I know, that from the moment the daughters are capable of receiving instruction, they shut them up in a religious house,

house, in order to teach them how to live in the world ; that they commit the care of improving their minds to persons, in whose estimation it were a crime to have any, and who are incapable of forming the heart, which they are ignorant of themselves.

The principles of religion, (the true basis of every virtue) are learnt only superficially and by rote. Their duties towards the divinity are not inculcated with more method. They consist in trifling ceremonies of an exterior worship, exacted with so much rigour, and practised with so much disgust, that it is the first yoke which they throw off on their entrance into the world ; or, indeed, if they still retain some forms of it, from the manner in which they observe them, one would really think, that it were only a kind of habitual politeness, which they pay to the divinity.

Nothing, besides, compensates the first rudiments of an ill-managed education. In France, they are almost perfect strangers to that respect for themselves, with which they are so studious to fill the hearts of our virgins. That generous sentiment, which renders us the severest judges
of

of our actions and our thoughts, and which becomes an infallible principle when it is well felt, is no refuge for the women here. From the little care they take of their souls, one might readily believe, that the French had fallen into the error of certain barbarous people, who deny them to have any.

To regulate the movements of the body, to adjust those of the face, to compose the exterior of the person, are the essential points of their education. It is from the attitudes more or less constrained of their daughters, that the parents make a boast of having brought them up well. They teach them to be covered with confusion, if they happen to commit a fault against good-breeding : but they do not tell them, that a courteous outside is nothing but hypocrisy, if it is not in perfect harmony with the soul. They excite in them perpetually that despicable self-love, whose effects are confined to their personal attractions : they conceal from them that, which constitutes true merit, and is satisfied only by esteem. The sole idea, which they impress them with of honour, is to be without lovers, by representing to them incessantly,

(as a recompense for the pain and constraint they impose upon them,) the certainty of pleasing : while the time, most precious for cultivating the mind, is employed in acquiring imperfect qualifications, which in youth are of little use, and which become ridiculous at a more advanced age.

But this is not all, my dear *Aza* ; the inconsistency of the French is without bounds. With such principles as these, they expect from their wives the practice of virtues, which they never have been taught : they do not even give them a just idea of the terms by which they are distinguished. I gain every day more information on that subject than I want, from the conversation

I have with young persons, whose ignorance excites in me no less astonishment, than all I have yet seen.

If I speak to them about the various affections of the mind, they excuse themselves from having any, because they are sensible to none but that of love. They understand only by the word *goodness*, that natural compassion, awakened at the sight of a suffering being: and I have even remarked, that they feel more for animals, than
they

they do for their fellow-creatures. But that tender sensibility, the offspring of reflection, which incites us to good actions with magnanimity and discernment, which carries along with it gentleness and humanity, is totally unknown to them. They think they have fulfilled all the duties of discretion, in revealing only to some friends the little secrets they have surprised, or with which they have been intrusted. But they have not the least idea of that delicate and prudent discrimination, necessary to be observed, to avoid injuring or wounding any one, and to maintain harmony in society.

If I attempt to explain to them what I understand by moderation, without which virtues almost become vices; if I open my lips about the purity of manners, and equity towards inferiors (so little practised in France) and the confidence to despise and shun the vicious of quality, I observe from their confusion, that they suspect I am speaking to them in the Peruvian language, and that they pretend to listen to me out of pure politeness.

Nor are they more enlightened as to the knowledge of the world, of mankind, and of society.

They are ignorant even of the use of their native tongue : it is seldom they speak it correctly ; and I find to my utter astonishment, that I know more of it now than themselves.

Their marrying their daughters, almost from children, is the effect of this ignorance. From that period, the parents seem to take as little interest in their conduct, as if they did not belong to them. The generality of the husbands care as little. There would still be sufficient time to repair the defects of the former education ; but they do not take the trouble.

A young woman admits into her apartment, without the least restraint, whatever company she pleases. Her occupations are commonly childish, always useless, and perhaps worse than doing nothing. They divert her mind, however, with malicious or insipid trifles, more fit to make her contemptible, than stupidity itself. With no confidence in his wife, the husband cares not to qualify her for the management of his affairs, of his family, or his house. She partakes in this little universe only by representation

tion, and is merely an ornamental image to amuse the curious. So that, in whatever degree a haughtiness of temper is mixed with a taste for dissipation, she gives into all irregularities, rapidly passes from independence to licentiousness, and, in a short time, draws upon her the contempt and indignation of mankind, in spite of their interest and inclination to tolerate the faults of youth, in favour of its allurements.

Although, my dear *Aza*, I have told thee, without disguise, what I know to be true, I would not have thee believe, that all the women here are without virtue, and without merit. There are some so happily gifted by nature, as to afford to themselves what education refuses them. Their strict observance of their duties, the propriety of their manners, and their amiable disposition, conciliate the esteem and admiration of the world. But the number of these is so limited, in proportion to the multitude, that they are known and respected by their own name. Nor do not believe, that the irregularities in the conduct of others proceed from any natural depravity. In general, it appears to me, that the women are born here, much more com-

monly than amongst us, with all the necessary propensities to rival the men in merit and in virtue. But, as if the latter acknowledged it in their hearts, and their pride could not brook this equality, they contribute in all ways to render them contemptible, both by treating their own wives with indifference and disrespect, and betraying those of others.

When thou knowest, that here authority is entirely on the side of the men, thou wilt see, my dear *Aza*, that they are accountable for all the disorders which happen in society. Those, who by a shameful supineness, suffer their wives to fall the victims to their caprices and their passions, though they are not the most criminal, are by no means the least despicable. But these are not sufficiently noticed, who by the example of a dissolute and vicious course, betray their wives into excesses through either pique or revenge.

Indeed, my dear *Aza*, what reason have they not to revolt against the injustice of laws, that tolerate the impunity of men, which is carried to an equal extent with their authority! A husband, without dreading the least punishment,
may

may observe towards his wife the most offensive conduct : he may dissipate, in every species of extravagance, equally criminal and excessive, not only his own and his childrens' property, but even that of the wretched victim, whom he suffers to pine in indigence, by a niggardliness in the necessary expences of his family, which here is very frequently allied to prodigality. He is warranted in severely punishing the slightest appearance of infidelity, by shamelessly giving himself up to as many other women, as his passions may suggest. In short, my dear *Aza*, it seems that in France, the ties of marriage are reciprocal only at the moment of its celebration, and that from that hour the women alone are bound to observe them.

I think, indeed I am sensible, that it would be paying them a very great compliment, to suppose them capable of preserving their affection for their husbands, in spite of the indifference and ill-treatment, which most of them experience. But who can brook contempt?

The first sentiment, which nature has implanted in the human heart, is the pleasure of existence; and we feel it more sensibly, as

we find ourselves more or less respected and esteemed.

The principal happiness of our infancy is to be loved by our parents, and caressed by strangers. That of the rest of our life consists in a due sense of the importance of our being, in proportion as it becomes necessary to the happiness of another. To thee am I indebted, my dear *Aza*, to thy extreme tenderness, to the ingenuousness of our hearts, and the sincerity of our sentiments, for revealing to me the mysteries of nature and of love. Friendship, that discreet and amiable tie, ought perhaps to satisfy all our wishes; but it divides its affection without offence, and without scruple, amongst a variety of objects: love, on the other hand, which gives and requires an exclusive preference, presents to us so sublime, and so flattering an idea of our being, that it alone can content that restless and inherent ambition of pre-eminence, which manifests itself in all ages, at all seasons, and in all conditions; while the natural desire for possession, decisively confirms our propensity to love.

If

If to possess a little furniture, a jewel, or an estate, is one of the most pleasing gratifications we experience, what ought to be that, which assures us the treasure of a heart, of a soul, of a free being, that voluntarily resigns itself in return for the pleasure of possessing in us the same advantages.

If it be true then, my dear *Aza*, that to conciliate the esteem of all, and the affection of an individual, is the prevailing ambition of our hearts, canst thou conceive by what infatuation the French can expect, that a young woman, treated with the most shameful neglect by her husband, should not endeavour to emancipate herself from a sort of annihilation, which presents itself to her in all manner of shapes? Dost thou imagine, that she can be persuaded to renounce every thing in an age, wherein the pretensions universally exceed merit? Canst thou divine, upon what grounds they require of her the practice of those virtues, which the men are excused from, when she is denied the principles and opportunities necessary to their observance? But the most incomprehensible thing of all is, that the parents and husbands

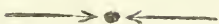
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complain

complain mutually of the contempt shewn to their wives and daughters ; while they themselves perpetuate the cause of it, from generation to generation, by the ignorance, incapacity, and prejudices, in which they bring them up.

O, my dear *Aza*, let not the dazzling vices of a nation, in other respects engaging, betray us into an indifference for the native simplicity of our own manners ! Let us never lose sight of our mutual obligations ; thou, on thy part, to be my support, my example, and my guide in the path of virtue ; I, on mine, to preserve thy esteem and thy love, by imitating so perfect, so divine a pattern.

LETTER XXXV.



OUR visits and fatigues, my dear *Aza*, could not have ended more agreeably. What a delightful day did I pass yesterday! How grateful to my heart are the fresh obligations, which *Deterville* and his sister confer upon me! But how will their pleasure be enhanced, when thou wilt be able to partake them with me!

After resting two days, we set out yesterday morning for Paris, *Celina*, her brother, her husband, and myself, for the purpose, as she said, of paying a visit to her best friend. We arrived at a villa, after a short journey, whose avenues and situation particularly struck me; but how

was I surprised on entering it, to find all the doors wide open, and at not meeting a single person.

This house, which was too beautiful to be deserted, and too small to contain the people that ought to inhabit it, appeared to me in no other light than an enchantment: I was amused at the idea, and asked *Celina*, if this were not the residence of some of those fairies, whom she had formerly made me read of, where the mistress of the house was invisible, as well as the servants.

“You will see her,” she replied; “but business of consequence calling her from home for the whole day, she desired me to beg of you to do the honours of the house during her absence. Before, however, you proceed,” added she, “you must sign your consent in writing.” “Very chearfully,” said I, entering into the joke.

I had no sooner uttered these words, than a man came in, dressed in black, with a pen and ink in his hand, and a paper already written on, which he presented to me. I immediately put my name where I was directed.

At

At the same instant, another man entered, of a decent appearance, who invited us, according to their custom, to accompany him to the place where they dine. We there found a table, set out with equal taste and magnificence. Scarcely had we seated ourselves, when the most delightful music was struck up in the adjoining room. Nothing indeed was wanting, that could render a repast truly agreeable. - Even *Deter-*
ville seemed to forget his trouble, and exerted himself to promote the cheerfulness of the company. He repeated his attachment to me in a thousand different ways, but always in the mildest and most courteous manner, unmixed with the bitterness of remonstrance or reproof.

We no sooner rose from table, than, invited by the serenity of the day, we all agreed, with one voice, to look about us. We found the gardens far more extensive than the appearance of the house led us to conclude. The harmony and taste displayed in their arrangement, charmed us only, in proportion as they heightened the beauties of simple nature.

We continued walking, till we entered a wood, situated at the end of this delightful garden.

There

There as we all four sat upon a shady turf, we saw, on one side, advancing towards us, a company of men in neat and rustic habits, with various instruments of music playing before them; and on the other, a group of young virgins dressed in white, with their heads adorned with field-flowers, and singing in rural but melodious notes, songs, in which to my surprise, I heard my name frequently repeated.

But it astonished me still more, on both parties being arrived, to see the most conspicuous of the men come forward, and, with one knee upon the ground, present to me several keys in a large salver, at the same time paying me a compliment, which my confusion prevented me from perfectly understanding. I merely collected, that being the principal of the villagers of the country, he came to do me homage as their sovereign, and to deliver me the keys of this house, of which I was also mistress.

Having ended his speech, he rose to make room for the prettiest of the young women. She presented me a sheaf of flowers, decorated with ribbands, which she likewise accompanied
with :

with a short speech in my praise, delivered in a graceful manner.

I was too embarrassed, my dear *Aza*, to answer those encomiums, to which I had such few pretensions : in other respects, every thing that passed wore so much the appearance of truth, that, at certain moments, I could not help believing, what, nevertheless, I found incredible. This reflection produced a variety of others. My mind was too much agitated to admit of my uttering a single word. I know not what diversion my embarrassment might have afforded the company ; but so distressing was it to myself, that *Deterville* seemed to feel it. He immediately made a sign to his sister, who, after distributing pieces of gold amongst the peasants of both sexes, (which he told them were only earnest of my goodwill towards them) rose up, and proposed a turn or two in the wood. I cheerfully complied, with the full intention, however, of reproving her for the awkward situation into which she had betrayed me. But I had not an opportunity ; for scarcely had we gone a few yards, before she stopped, and looking at me with a smiling countenance,

“ confess

“confess, *Zilia*,,” said she, “are you not very angry with us? and how much more so will you be, when I tell you, that in truth, these grounds and this mansion belong to you!”

“To me!” exclaimed I. “Ah, *Celina*! is this then what you promised me? Whether it be intended as an insult or a joke you carry it too far.” “Hear me,” said she, more seriously. “If my brother has disposed of some part of your treasures in order to make the purchase, and, instead of troubling you with the tedious and necessary forms attending it, has reserved to you nothing but the surprise, when every thing was settled, should you despise and hate us? Cannot you forgive us for procuring you, at all events, a dwelling that took your fancy, and for rendering your life, in future, comfortable and independent? You signed, this morning, the authentic instrument, that makes you mistress of both. So scold away as much as you please,” added she, smiling, “if you are not satisfied.”

“Ah, my amiable friend!” cried I, tenderly embracing her, “I feel too forcibly your generous offices to express my gratitude.”

These

These few words were all I could say. I was immediately sensible of the importance of such a service. Affected, overcome, transported with joy, in anticipating the pleasure of consecrating to thee this charming abode, my feelings deprived me of the power of utterance. I bestowed on *Celina* a thousand caresses, which she returned with equal tenderness; and after giving me a little time to recover myself, we went back towards the wood to seek her brother and her husband.

A fresh agitation seized me on approaching *Deterville*, and suspended again the expressions of my heart. I gave him my hand: he kissed it, without saying a word, and turned aside to conceal the tears which he could not repress, and which I attributed to his satisfaction at seeing me so well pleased. Overpowered, at once, with his tenderness and generosity, I shed some myself. *Celina's* husband, who was the least interested in what passed, soon restored conviviality and cheerfulness amongst us. He complimented me on my new dignity, and persuaded us to return to the house, in order, as he said, to examine its faults, and convince *Deterville*,
that

that his taste was not quite so refined as he conceived.

Shall I confess to thee, my dear *Aza*? every thing that presented itself on our way back appeared to assume a new form. The flowers seemed to me more beautiful, the trees clothed in a brighter green, the compartments of the gardens more judiciously disposed. I found the house more pleasant, the furniture more sumptuous, nay the smallest trifle became interesting to me.

I hurried through the apartments with an extacy and impatience, that would not permit me to examine any thing. The only place, in which I made the least stay, was a pretty large room, lined with a sort of network delicately wrought in gold, which contained a prodigious number of books, of all colours, of all forms, and of a surprising neatness. I was so enchanted, that it were impossible, I thought, to quit them, before I had read them all. *Celina* drew me away, by reminding me of a golden key, which *Deterville* had restored to me. I instantly unlocked a door to which I was directed, and stood

stood motionless at the sight of the magnificent things, that presented themselves before me.

This was a closet, entirely covered with glasses and pictures of a superior brilliancy. The wainscots, which were painted green, and ornamented with figures admirably designed, represented a part of the games and ceremonies of the city of the Sun, agreeable to the description I had given of them to *Deterville*.

I saw our dear Virgins in a thousand different places, drawn in the very same dress that I wore, on my arrival in France: nay, I was told even, that they were like me.

The sacred ornaments of the Temple, which I had left behind me in the religious house, supported by gilt pyramids, adorned all the corners of this superb cabinet. The image of the Sun (suspended from the middle of a ceiling, painted with the most beautiful colours of the sky) completed by its lustre, the splendid embellishments of this charming retreat; while the necessary furniture, so judiciously adapted to the paintings, heightened the effect,

Deterville.

Deterville, availing himself of the silence, which my amazement, my joy, and admiration occasioned, said, as he approached me: "you may perceive, fair *Zilia*, that the golden chair is missing in this new Temple of the Sun. A magic power has transformed it into a house, a garden, and domain. If I did not employ my own science in this business, it was not without regret: but it was necessary to respect your delicacy. Behold," said he (opening a little cupboard ingeniously contrived within the wall) "behold the ruins of this magical operation." At the same time, he shewed me a strong box, full of pieces of gold, of the French coin. "This you must know," continued he, "is not the least necessary article with us. I thought it my duty to preserve a small portion of it for your use."

I was beginning to express to him my warmest acknowledgments, and the sincere admiration, which so tender a precaution excited in my heart, when *Celina* hurried me into a room, next to this mysterious cabinet. "Now," said she, "you shall also see the power of my art." She then opened large chests of drawers, abounding
in

in such a variety of choice stuffs, linen, apparel, in short every thing worn by women, that I could not help asking her with a smile, how long she would have me live, in order to make use of so many fine things. ‘As long,’ answered she, “as my brother and myself.” “And may you both,” replied L, in an animated tone, “live as long as I love you, and I know who will die first.”

So saying, we returned into the Temple of the Sun; that is the name, given to the wonderful closet. Recovered from my agitation, I expressed the sentiments of my heart with the sincerity I felt them. What kindness! what generosity! How noble was the whole conduct of both *Deterville* and his sister!

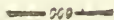
We passed the rest of the day in the sweet interchange of confidence and esteem. I did the honours of the supper-table with still more spirit, than I did those at dinner. I gave my orders to the servants with less restraint, since I knew them to be my own. I joked about my opulence and authority. I did every thing in my power to make my benefactors happy in the participation of their own favours.

I thought however I perceived; that, as the evening advanced, *Deterville* fell again into his usual melancholy, and, that every now and then a tear even stole down the cheeks of *Celina*. But they resumed so instantaneously an air of composure. that I believed myself mistaken.

I endeavoured to prevail upon them to stay a few days, and partake with me the happiness they had procured me : but in vain. We came back the same night, agreeing to return shortly to my enchanted palace.

O, my dear *Aza*, what will be my felicity, when I can enjoy and live in it with thee !

LETTER XXXVI.



THE dejection, my dear *Aza*, of *Deterville* and his sister, has continued to increase ever since our return from my enchanted palace. Feeling as I do a sincere esteem for both, I conjured them to explain to me the cause of their uneasiness: but seeing they persisted in keeping it from me, I concluded some fresh accident had interfered with thy journey; and, in a very little time, my anxiety exceeded their sorrow. I did not conceal the cause, and my amiable friends soon relieved my suspense.

Deterville confessed, that he meant to have kept from me the day of thy arrival, in order to surprise me; but that my uneasiness obliged him to break

his resolution. In fact, he shewed me a letter from the guide he appointed to attend thee ; and from the calculation of the time, and the place whence it was dated, he gave me to understand, that I might expect thee to-day, to-morrow, or even the very instant he was talking of it ; in short, that it was impossible to say how soon I might be the happiest of women.

Having thus far proceeded, *Deterville* did not hesitate to disclose to me all the further particulars of his plans. He shewed me the apartment he designs for thee. Thou art to reside here, till, our marriage being solemnized, decency permits us to live together in my charming castle. I shall never more lose sight of thee, dear object of my tenderness : nothing will ever tear thee again from me. *Deterville* has provided every thing, and (if possible) has confirmed my opinion of his goodness and generosity.

I am satisfied from what passed, that thy approaching arrival is the sole cause of his uneasiness. I pity him from my heart, and sympathize in his affliction. I wish him a happiness, that depends not upon myself, and which may be a worthy recompense of his virtue. I even
suppress

suppress a part of my transports, that I may not increase the oppression of his soul. This is all I can do : for my felicity is too great entirely to conceal it : so that, although I believe thou art very near me, although my heart flutters at the least noise, although I frequently leave off at the middle of a word to run to the window, I cannot help writing to thee. It is a necessary relief to the transports of my soul. Thou art nearer to me, it is true ; but art thou less absent, than if the ocean still divided us ? I do not see thee ; thou canst not hear me : why should I cease then to converse with thee by the only means in my power ?

Another moment and I shall see thee : but that moment is not arrived. Can I better fill up the interval of thy absence, than in painting to thee the ardency of my love ? Alas ! thou hast never seen it, but in affliction.—Buried be those melancholy days in oblivion ! With what extasy will they be effaced from my remembrance !

Aza, dear *Aza*—how precious is that name ! The time is just at hand, when I shall call thee

no more in vain. Thou wilt hear me: thou wilt fly at the sound of my voice. The tenderest expressions of my heart shall be the reward of thy haste.

LETTER XXXVII.

TO THE CHEVALIER DETERVILLE,
MALTA.

COULD you anticipate, Sir, without remorse, the bitter anxiety you were about to add to the happiness you had prepared for me? How could you have the cruelty to surprise my heart by such agreeable circumstances, by such powerful excitements to my gratitude and admiration, even at the very moment you were contemplating your departure? Was it with a design, Sir, to render me more sensible of your absence and your despair? But two days ago, I tasted, to the full, the sweets of friendship. I now, alas! experience the bitterest regret;

Celina, distracted as she is, has but too faithfully obeyed your orders. With one hand, she presented to me *Aza*; with the other, your cruel letter. Even in the full completion of my wishes, my soul was oppressed with grief. In being restored to the dear object of my tenderness, I was not insensible to the loss of him, to whom I am bound by every other tie. Ah, *Deterville*! how have you sullied your numberless kind offices by one ungenerous act! But do not hope to carry into effect your unjust and fatal resolutions. No; the sea shall not separate you for ever from all that is dear to you. The name of *Zilia* shall be familiar to your ears: you shall receive my letters; you shall hear my prayers: blood and friendship shall reassume their empire in your heart; you shall restore yourself to the bosom of a family, to which I were accountable for your loss.

What! in return for so many services, should I embitter your days, and those of your kind sister? Should I destroy so tender an union? Should I plant a thorn in your hearts, even while I am reaping the effects of your goodness? No; do not dream of it. I cannot behold myself, without horror, in a house which I fill with mourning

mourning. I am sensible of your kindness in the affectionate treatment I meet with from *Celina*, even at the moment, when I should excuse her for hating me : but, great as it is, I will for ever disclaim it ; I will fly from places, which I no longer can bear the sight of, unless you return. Ah! *Deterville*, how greatly do you deceive yourself ! What blindness betrays you into a resolution so opposite to the end you propose ? You design to make me happy ; but you only make me criminal : you would fain dry up my tears ; and you cause them to flow, and yet lose by your absence the fruit of your sacrifice.

Alas, Sir ! you would have found perhaps but too much pleasure in that interview, which appeared to you so formidable. That *Aza*, whom I doated on so much, is no more the same *Aza*, that I painted to you in such tender colours. The coolness he betrayed at our meeting, the praises he lavished upon the Spaniards (and with which he a hundred times interrupted the fond effusions of my soul) the galling indifference, with which he talks of staying but a few days in France, the curiosity that draws him

away from me even at the present moment, all concur to inspire me with a dread of evils, which I tremble to anticipate. Ah, *Deterville*! you will not perhaps be long the most wretched of human beings.

If self-compassion can have no effect upon you, let the duties of friendship persuade you to return. It is the only asylum of unfortunate love. Should those ills, which I apprehend, at last overwhelm me, what cause will you not have to reproach yourself! If *Deterville* forsakes me, where shall I find a heart sensible to my sufferings? Shall generosity, hitherto the strongest of your passions, give way, at last, to disappointed love? No; I cannot think it: you are incapable of yielding to it. But hasten to confirm my opinion of your fortitude, if you value your own glory and my peace.

LETTER XXXVIII.



TO THE CHEVALIER DETERVILLE,
MALTA.

WERE you not, Sir, the noblest of beings, I should be the most degraded. Did you not possess the most benevolent soul, the most feeling heart, would it be to you I should confess my shame and my despair? But, alas! what more have I to fear? What more have I to care for? Every thing is lost to me.

It is not the loss of my liberty, of my rank, of my country, that I now regret. It is no longer the solicitude of an innocent passion, that deluges my eyes. No: it is the violation of plighted faith; it is despised love, that

lacerates my heart. *Aza*——*Aza* is inconstant! —*Aza* inconstant! What an effect have those fatal words upon my soul!——my blood freezes in my veins——a torrent of tears——

From the Spaniards I first became acquainted with misfortune; but the last is the severest stroke of all. It is they who rob me of *Aza's* heart: it is their cruel religion that tolerates his crime. It sanctions, it prescribes infidelity, perfidy and ingratitude; but it prohibits the love of one's own relations. Were I a stranger and unknown, *Aza* might then love me. United, however, by the ties of blood, he must abandon me, he must take away my life, without shame, without regret, without remorse.

Alas! strange as this religion is, had it been necessary only to embrace it, in order to recover the treasure it deprives me of, I would have reconciled my mind to its illusions. In the bitterness of my soul, I required to be instructed in it: but my tears were disregarded. I cannot be admitted into so pure a society, without abandoning the motive which urges me to seek it, without renouncing my affection, or (in other words) without changing my existence,

This

This excessive severity, I candidly confess, strikes me in an equal degree as it disgusts me. I feel a kind of involuntary veneration for laws, which, in other respects, appeared to me so pure and consistent. But is it in my power to adopt them? And if indeed it were, what advantage should I derive from it? I have lost *Aza's* heart. Ah! too wretched *Zilia*!

The cruel *Aza* has preserved nothing of the ingenuousness of our manners, but a respect for truth, of which he makes, alas! so fatal a use. Captivated with the charms of a young Spanish beauty, on the point of being married to her, he consented to come over to France, only to excuse himself from the faith he had pledged to me, to undeceive me as to his intentions, to restore me a liberty I detest, to deprive me of my life.

Yes; it is in vain he restores me to myself. My heart is still his, and shall be to the hour of my death. My life belongs to him: let him take it from me, so he will but love me.

You were in full possession of my fate; why then did you only partially inform me of it? Why did you suffer me for a moment

even to suspect, that I was unjust to you? And yet, why do I blame you for it? I should not have believed you. Blind and preposessed, I would have flown to meet my fate. I would have conducted her victim to my rival. I should be now——Oh Gods! defend me from the horrible idea.

Deterville, too generous friend! am I worthy to be heard? Forget my injustice. Pity an innocent and wretched creature, whose just esteem for you still triumphs over a neglected and infatuated passion.

LETTER XXXIX.



TO THE CHEVALIER DETERVILLE,
MALTA.

FROM your complaining, Sir, of me, you must be ignorant of the situation, out of which I am just relieved by the cruel kindness of *Celina*. How could I write to you, when I was incapable even of thinking? Had I been susceptible of the least impressions; my confidence in you would have been the first. But encompassed with shades of death, my blood froze in every vein. I was a long time insensible of my own existence: nay, I had forgot my misfortune. Oh, Heaven! why in recalling me to life, didst thou recal to me that bitter remembrance!

He is gone! I shall see him no more! He flies me! He ceases to love me; he told me so with his own lips! My fate is decided. He takes another wife, and honour obliges him to abandon me. Well, cruel *Aza*! if the capricious honour of Europe possesses any charms for thee, mayst thou likewise imitate the art that accompanies it!

Happy women of this country! you also are deceived; but you long enjoy an error, which would at present be to me my only consolation. Hypocrisy prepares you for the mortal blow that crushes me. Oh, fatal sincerity of my nation, do you cease then to be a virtue? Courage, fortitude, can you become crimes, when occasion requires it?

Yes; thou didst see me at thy feet, inhuman *Aza*! thou didst see those feet bathed with my tears; and thy flight——Horrible moment! why do I not sink into the earth at thy remembrance?

Had my body not been oppressed by the weight of my affliction, *Aza* should not have triumphed over my weakness:—thou never hadst gone alone. I would have followed thee,
ungrateful

ungrateful as thou art ; I would have seen thee : I would, at least, have expired in thy sight.

Deterville, what fatal weakness hurried you so far from me ? You might have interceded for me. Where my distracted state prevented me from suing, your persuasive eloquence and reason might have prevailed : *Aza*, perhaps, had still been here ! But, by this time arrived in Spain, supremely blest——Vain regrets ! fruitless despair ! My heart is charged with grief.

Do not attempt, Sir, to surmount the obstacles which detain you at Malta, for the purpose of returning hither. What would you do here ? Fly a wretch, who is no longer sensible of kindnesses, who is a torment to herself, whose only wish it is to die.

LETTER

LETTER XL.



TO THE CHEVALIER DETERVILLE,
MALTA.

TAKE courage, too generous friend. I was unwilling to write to you till my days were in safety, and, less agitated myself, I could calm your inquietudes. I breathe: fate so ordains it, and I obey.

The kind offices of your amiable sister have restored me to health, which has been supported by intervals of reflection. The assurance, that my misfortune is without remedy, has done the rest. I know that *Aza* is arrived in Spain, that his crime is complete. My grief is not extinguished; but the cause is no longer worthy my regret

regret. If any yet remains in my heart, it is due alone to the pains I have given you, to my errors, to the wanderings of my reason.

Alas! in proportion as it enlightens me, I discover its impotency. Can it mitigate one pang of an afflicted soul? Excessive grief involves us again in the weakness of childhood. In that state, as in this, we are affected only by objects immediately before us. The sight appears to be the only sense, that is intimately connected with the soul. Of this I have had too fatal an experience.

On my recovering from the long and painful lethargy, into which I was plunged by the flight of ungrateful *Aza*, the first wish that nature excited in my heart, was to retire into that solitude, which I owe to your provident and tender care. It was not without much difficulty I obtained *Celina's* leave for that purpose. I find in this retreat an asylum for despair, which the world, nor even friendship, could ever have afforded me. In your sister's house, her consoling discourses were unable to divert my attention from objects, which incessantly revived the perfidy of *Aza*.

The

The door at which *Celina* brought him into my chamber, on the day of your departure and of his arrival; the chair on which he sat; the spot, in which he revealed to me my fate and in which he returned to me my fond and faithful letters; even the very wainscot, where these eyes have been so often rivetted to his shadow, all daily excited fresh troubles in my soul:

Here, on the contrary, every thing I see recalls to my remembrance those agreeable ideas, that I received at the first sight of this peaceful retirement. I trace nothing but the image of your invaluable friendship, and that of your amiable sister.

If the remembrance of *Aza* ever comes across my mind, he appears to me the same constant, the same honourable *Aza*, I then considered him. I imagine myself waiting his arrival. I indulge this illusion as long as it is pleasing to me. When it forsakes me, I fly to books; I endeavour to collect my whole attention to them. New ideas, by degrees, envelop the horrid truth, wrapt in the recesses of my heart, and at length afford some intermission to my sorrow.

Shall

Shall I confess? the sweets of liberty sometimes present themselves to my imagination: I listen to them. Surrounded with agreeable objects, their possession has charms which I endeavour to enjoy. Conscious of my integrity, I rely but little on my reason. I give way to my infirmities. I combat the weaknesses of my heart, only by yielding to those of my mind. The diseases of the soul do not admit of violent remedies.

Perhaps those haughty notions of decency, that distinguish your nation, allow not to one of my age the independence and solitude in which I live: at least *Celina*, whenever she comes to see me, would impress me with that idea. But she has not yet given me sufficient reasons to convince me. True decency reigns in my heart. It is not to the phantom of virtue I pay homage, but to virtue herself. She shall be always the judge and guide of my actions. To her do I consecrate my life, and my heart to friendship. Alas! when will it reign there, undivided and immutable?

LETTER

LETTER XLI.



TO THE CHEVALIER DETERVILLE,
PARIS.

I RECEIVED, Sir, almost at the same instant, the news of your having left Malta, and of your arrival at Paris. Whatever pleasure I may promise myself at seeing you again, it cannot do away the uneasiness which your note has just given me.

What, *Deterville*! after having pledged yourself in all your letters never for the future to revive your attachment; after having taught me to expect, that I never should again have a passion to contend with that distresses me, you deliver yourself up more than ever to its violence,

To

To what end do you affect a deference towards me, which you contradict at the same moment? You ask leave to see me, you promise an implicit obedience to my will; and yet, you endeavour to convince me of those very sentiments, which are the most repugnant to it, which offend me exceedingly, and which in short, I never will countenance.

But since you are deluded by a false hope, since you mistake my confidence, and the true state of my soul, it is proper for me to make you acquainted with my resolutions, and which, you will find more firm than your own.

You flatter yourself in vain if you imagine, that my heart will consent to wear new chains. The perfidy of another shall never make me false to my own engagements. The purity of my soul disclaims it. Would to heaven it could make me forget the ungrateful object! But were it indeed possible, yet, true to myself, I would not incur the guilt of perjury. The cruel *Aza* abandons a boon that was once dear to him: his rights over me, however, are no less sacred. I may conquer my passion, it is true; but I never can give my heart to another. Every
sentiment.

sentiment, that friendship is capable of inspiring, is due to you ; no one shall share them with you ; they are your right ; I promise them to you ; I will be faithful to them. You shall enjoy, in the same degree, my confidence and sincerity : they shall both be unlimited. All those lively and refined sentiments, which love unfolded in my heart, shall turn to the good of friendship. I will let you see, with equal candour, my regret that I was not a native of your country, and my invincible attachment for *Aza*. I will tell you, without disguise, the real pleasure I should have felt in owing to your hands the advantage of reflection, and my eternal gratitude to him, who procured me that inestimable and divine blessing : We will dive into the recesses of each other's soul. Friendship, like love, can add wings to time. There are a thousand ways to make it interesting, and relieve it from satiety.

You shall give me some light into your sciences and your arts. You shall enjoy, in this instance, the pleasure of superiority ; while I will claim the credit for discovering virtues in your heart, which you are unconscious of possessing.

sessing. You shall adorn my mind with whatever may render it agreeable in conversation: you shall reap the fruits of your own labour: I will strive, on my part, to make you value and enjoy the charms of simple friendship, and I shall take a pride in my success.

Celina, in dividing her regard between us, shall occasionally relieve our more serious conversations by her native vivacity. What more can we desire?

You are deceived in your apprehensions, that solitude affects my health. Believe me, *Deterville*, solitude becomes dangerous only by inaction. Continually employed, I shall find a new charm in every thing, that habit renders irksome or insipid.

Without diving into the secrets of nature, is not the simple contemplation of her wonders sufficient incessantly to vary and renew employments, that are always agreeable? Does life suffice to obtain a superficial, but interesting knowledge, of the universe, of all that surrounds me, of my own existence?

The pleasure of being, that forgotten and even unknown pleasure to so many blind mortals;
the

the reflection so sweet, the felicity so pure, that, *I am, I live, I exist*, could alone make us happy, did we bear it in our minds, did we indulge it, did we appreciate its value.

Come, *Deterville*, come and learn from me to husband the resources of our souls, and the benefits of nature. Renounce those turbulent passions, the imperceptible destroyers of our being. Come, and be taught innocent and lasting pleasures: come and partake them with me. You shall find in my heart, in my friendship; in my sentiments, all that can make you amends for love.

The End of ZILIA's Letters.

THE
SEQUEL
TO THE
PERUVIAN PRINCESS
CONSISTING OF
THE LETTERS
OF
AZA.

ADVERTISEMENT.



ON reading the Letters of a Peruvian Princess, I recollected having seen in Spain, some years ago, a collection written by a Peruvian prince, whose history appeared to me strongly to resemble that of *Zilia*. Having procured the manuscript, I found them to be the identical letters of *Aza*, translated into Spanish. It is doubtless to *Aza's* friend, KANHUISCAP (to whom most of them are addressed) that we are indebted for their translation from the Peruvian.

The interest they excited in me led me to undertake a French translation of them. I felt a satisfaction, in proportion as they effaced those prejudices from my mind, with

which *Zilia* had inspired me, of a prince more unfortunate than inconstant. Others, I doubt not, will feel the same happiness. To see virtue vindicated is always a great pleasure.

Many may perhaps blame *Aza* for ascribing to the Spaniards those faults and even vices, peculiar to the French nation. But however specious this charge may at first appear, it will very soon fall to the ground, when we consider with M. FONTENELLE, that an Englishman and a Frenchman are countrymen at Pekin.

I dare not flatter myself, that I have preserved that loftiness in the images, that energy and expression in the sentiments, which distinguish the original. This may be owing to the difference of the two languages, and the common lot of translations. The reader will perhaps think otherwise, and we may both have reason on our side.

THE
LETTERS OF AZA.



LETTER I.

TO ZILIA.

MAY thy tears be dissipated like the dew before the rising Sun ! May thy fetters, changed into flowers, fall at thy feet, and represent to thee, by the brightness of their colours, the ardency of a love more fervent, than the divine star that gave it birth ! *Zilia*, dismiss thy fears. *Aza* still lives ; that is, eternally loves thee.

Our miseries are nearly ended : the happy moment is at hand, that will unite us for ever. O heavenly felicity ! what can retard your consummation ?

The predictions of *Viracocha** are not accomplished. I am still on the august throne of *Manco-capac*; and *Zilia* is not by my side! I am a sovereign; and thou art in chains!

Be comforted, sweet object of my affection. The Sun has but too well tried our love: he now prepares to crown it. These knots, the weak interpreters of our sentiments; these knots, whose use I bless, and whose lot I envy, shall behold thee free. Yes; the doors of thy gloomy prison shall be opened to thee: thou shalt fly into the bosom of *Aza*. As the dove, escaped from the talons of the vulture, hastens to enjoy her happiness with her faithful mate; so shalt thou repose in my heart, still palpitating with fear, thy past sufferings, thy tenderness, and my felicity. What joy! what transport! in thus cancelling for ever the remembrance of thy woes. Thou shalt behold at thy feet the brutal masters of the thunder; and those very hands, that put on thy fetters, shall assist thee in ascending a throne.

But

* The *Inca*, who had foretold the destruction of the empire by the Spaniards.

But why should the memory of my misfortunes for an instant interrupt so pure a happiness? Why should I remind thee of ills that are no more? Do we not abuse the blessings of the gods, when we neglect to enjoy them in their full extent? Not to forget our troubles is in a degree to merit them. Yet thou wouldst have me, my dear *Zilia*, add to my misfortunes the shame of having suffered them deservedly. I love thee; I can tell it thee; I am about to see thee again. What further information can I give thee of my lot? How shall I describe to thee the past, when I cannot express the sentiments, which even at this moment agitate my soul?——But what do I say! It is thy pleasure; thou shalt be obeyed.

Recal then to thy memory, (if thou canst without expiring) recal that dreadful day, that day whose dawn was gladness. The Sun, more brilliant, diffused over my face the same rays; with which he enlightened thine. Transports of joy, and flames of love, penetrated my heart. My soul was incorporated with that divinity, to which it owes its existence. My eyes sparkled

with the fire, which they had stolen from thine, and beamed with a thousand desires. Restrained by the decency of forms, I proceeded to the Temple: my heart outstripped my feet. Already I beheld thee, fairer than the morning-star, more blooming than the new-blown rose, chiding our *Cusipatas* for their tardiness, and tenderly lamenting to me the obstacle that delayed our union; when in an instant, oh dreadful remembrance! the thunder roared; peals after peals tremendous rent the skies. All fell prostrate around me. I myself fell down to adore *Yalpor*: for thee I implored its protection. The peals redoubled; they abated; they ceased. I rose, trembling for thy safety. What a horrible scene! Enveloped in a cloud of sulphur, surrounded with flames and blood; involved in frightful darkness, my eyes saw nothing but death, my ears heard nothing but cries, and my heart sought only thee; all told it thou wert no more. I still hear the fatal crack. I see thee pale and disfigured; thy tender bosom soiled with blood and dust: a cruel fire consumes thee.

The

The clouds are at length dispersed, and the darkness dissipated. Canst thou believe it, *Zilia*? This was not the mighty *Yahor*. No; the gods are not so cruel. Barbarians, that usurped their power, made us sensible of all its force. I no sooner distinguished the hateful savages, than I rushed into the midst of them. Love, and insulted heaven, lent me their assistance: thy presence strengthened my avenging arm. I flew to thy succour: I bore down all before me. One moment more and I had saved thee! They had just dragged thee through the sacred gate: I saw no more of thee. Grief weighed me down: despair unmanned my soul. Furious, distracted, I fell upon them. I sustained, for a while, the unequal combat. The violence of my strokes shivered my very arms. Exhausted, at length, and overpowered by numbers, I sunk upon the outraged relics of my ancestors.* My blood and my tears were blended with their profaned bodies, with those of thy expiring companions, with the very garlands

* The Peruvians deposited in the Temple the embalmed bodies of some of their kings.

garlands, with which thy hands were to have adorned my brow, and which those hands had so exquisitely woven. A deadly chill seized my senses. A dimness came over my eyes; they closed. I ceased to live, without ceasing to love thee.

Doubtless, my dear *Zilia*, it was love, and the hope of avenging thee, that restored me to life. I found myself in my palace, surrounded by my attendants. Fury succeeded my weakness. The air resounded with my terrible cries. I seized my arms: I urged my guards on to vengeance. "Perish," cried I, "perish the impious barbarians! they have profaned our sanctuaries. Arm! arm! attack! let us destroy these cruel monsters." Nothing could appease my rage. But when the *Capa-Inca*, my honoured father, apprized of my fury, assured me that I should again behold thee, that thy days were in safety, that we should still be united; what joy, what new transports, took possession of my soul! O, my dear *Zilia*! can a heart be susceptible of so much pleasure? •

A base passion for a vile metal alone brought the barbarians into these places. My father
knew

knew their object and has satisfied them. They will depart, at length, loaded with his presents, as soon as they shall have restored thee to my wishes. These people, softened by that gold, alike instrumental in arming them against us, and conciliating their friendship, are for ever now expressing their gratitude and respect. They prostrate themselves before me, like our *Cusipatas* before the Sun. Is it possible, that a wretched mass of matter can thus change the heart of man, and render even barbarians the instruments of my felicity? Is it to a metal, to monsters, we are indebted, for the suspension and the ultimate consummation of our happiness?

Adorable *Zilia*! light of my soul! What emotions did thy words, which so pathetically painted the calamity that separated us, excite in my breast! I was present with thee in every danger. My fury was renewed; but the assurances of thy tenderness, so fondly intermixed with the description of thy sufferings, like a comfortable balm, softened the wound it gave me. No, *Zilia*; no earthly possession can equal the treasure of thy heart. All my senses

are devoted to it. My impatience increases: it consumes me: I burn: I die.

Come, *Zilia*, and restore me to to life. *Zilia!* *Zilia!* O, that *Lhuama** would lend thee his wings! That the swiftest lightening would bear thee to my arms; while my heart, still more rapid, flies to meet thine!

* The great eagle of Peru.

LETTER II.*

— 000 —

TO ZILIA.

WHAT! *Zilia*! is not the earth annihilated! Does the Sun still shine upon us, while falsehood and treason triumph in his empire! Even the virtues themselves are banished from my distracted heart; fury and despair succeed them.

Those brutal Spaniards, who were bold enough to load thee with fetters, but too cowardly, too inhuman to break them, have dared to deceive me. In defiance of their promises, thou art not restored to me.

E 6

Yalpor

* This letter was not sent to *Zilia*.

Yalpor, why dost thou slumber? Hurl all thy vengeance, turn thy destructive bolts against those treacherous monsters that usurped them. Let a poisonous flame, after a thousand torments, reduce them to ashes. Barbarous wretches! whose crime can be expiated only by the blood of their latest posterity.* Perfidious nation! whose desolated cities should be sown with stones, and sprinkled with blood,† what horrors do you add to the infamy of perjury!

Already have the sacred rays of the Sun twice enlightened his children, and my beloved *Zilia* is not restored to my impatient wishes! Those eyes, in which my happiness should be fixed, are at this moment drowned in tears. It is, perhaps, through the most bitter tears, that those fires are darted, which consume my heart. Those very arms, in which the gods should crown the most ardent affection, are still perhaps bound in ignominious chains. Oh! insupportable grief! Oh! distracting thought!

Tremble,

* The Peruvians extended the punishment of this crime to the descendants of the offender.

† They destroyed even the cities, where public offenders were born. They covered the streets with stones, and sprinkled them with blood, by way of malediction.

Tremble, base mortals! The Sun has lent me his avenging powers: my injured love shall render them more fatal.

By thee I swear, thou animating star, from whom we derive our souls,* and through whom we exist; by thy pure flames, whose divine heat now inspires me: O Sun! may I never more behold thy benign rays! plunged in hideous night, may the grateful dawn, that announces thy return be for ever shut out from me, if *Aza* does not extirpate that impious race, who have dared to pollute with falshood these sacred abodes! Dry up, my dear *Zilia*, thou unhappy object of all my tenderness, dry up thy tears. Soon shalt thou see thy lover overthrow thine enemies, set thee free, and load the perfidious monsters with thy chains. Every moment shall augment my fury and their punishment. A cruel joy already swells my heart; already I fancy myself bathed in the blood of perjurers: rage signalizes my love.

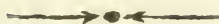
I go:

* The Peruvians considered the soul as an emanation from the Sun.

I go. I will exceed them in barbarity. Their example shall be my guide. I fly to the pursuit. *Zilia*, my dearest *Zilia*, be assured of my victory: it is thy cause and heaven's I hasten to avenge.

LETTER

LETTER III.



FROM MADRID.

TO KANHUISCAP.

WHAT divinity, generous *Kanhuisap*, in pity to my woes, has preserved me the blessing of thy friendship? It is then true, that in the midst of the bitterest afflictions, we can enjoy some intervals of comfort; and that, however miserable ourselves, we can contribute to the happiness of others. Thy own hands are loaded with fetters, and thou eatest the weight of thy friend's: thy own soul is oppressed with grief, and thou lessenest the sorrows of my heart.

A stranger, and a captive, in these barbarous regions, thou makest me enjoy my own country.

Dead

Dead to all other men, I would live with thee alone. It is only for thee, that my distracted mind is capable of expressing itself, and that my feeble hands occasionally form those knots, which, in spite of our cruel enemies, still serve to unite us.

Thou must pardon me, *Kanhuisap*, if love the most tender, the most ardent, is more frequently my theme, than friendship and revenge. The sweets of the one may alleviate our troubles; the transports of the other can make us forget them. Every thing yields to love.

But do not imagine, that the severest strokes of fate can ever daunt my soul. When a king, I thought as a king : now though a slave, I think not as a slave. I thirst for vengeance, for sweet, but hopeless vengeance. Fain would I change both thy lot and my own : I can only deplore them.

Go ; die. They transport us into a new world ; and, in spite of my entreaties, they divide us. Our tyrants become jealous of our friendship. Inured to wickedness, how can they do otherwise than fear virtue ?

Was

Was it thus, *Kanhuiscap*, that day should have ended, on which thy valour and mine, and above all, my love, should have rendered me, by triumphing over my enemies, worthy of the hand that armed me, of that bright star which gave me birth, of thy admiration?—that day, on which the Sun, who abominates perjury, ought to have avenged his children, have gorged them with the smoking flesh of these monsters, and drenched them with their hateful blood?*

Was it thus I was to vindicate the gods of *Zilia*? *Zilia*, who, consumed by the most ardent love, yet burns in fetters, which I cannot break! *Zilia*, whom impious ravishers———Oh gods! banish far from me these dreadful ideas——What do I say? No, *Kanhuiscap*; the gods themselves cannot efface their impression from my mind. I no longer behold *Zilia*: a cruel element divides us. Perhaps her affliction, our enemies, the waves

* The Peruvians ate the flesh of their enemies, and drank their blood, with which the women rubbed the breast, when they suckled.

waves——A mortal stroke pierces my heart.
I sink, my friend, under the pressure of my
woes. My *quipos* drop from my hands. *Zilia*
——my beloved *Zilia*——

LETTER IV.



TO KANHUISCAP.

F AITHFUL *Anqui*, thy *quipos* for a moment quieted my fears, but they could not remove them. Frightful images continually succeed that healing balm, which thy friendship diffuses over my woes. I behold every instant my *Zilia* in chains, the Sun outraged, his temples profaned. I see my father bending under the weight of irons, as well as years: I see my country desolated. I exist only in my grief; every thing conspires to increase it. The shades of night present to my mind nothing but dreadful visions. In vain sleep invites me to

a respite from my troubles: in its arms I find only torments. This very night *Zilia* again appeared before me. The horrors of death were depicted on her countenance. My name seemed to escape her pale, dying lips. I saw it traced upon the *quipos*, while she had yet the power of holding them. Strange barbarians, whose arms were stained with blood, bore her, in the midst of flames, of tumult, and of cries, out of one of those enormous machines, that conveyed us. They appeared to present her in triumph to their hideous chief; when, in an instant, the sea, mounting to the skies, exhibited to my view nothing but waves of blood, floating bodies, vast fragments of wood, (partly consumed,) fires, and devouring flames.

In vain do I attempt to banish from my mind these melancholy thoughts: they are, alas! too forcibly imprinted. Nothing alleviates my grief: every thing conduces to augment it. I loathe the very air I breathe. I complain to the waves that they did not swallow me up. I complain to the gods that they suffer me still to live. Would their goodness, less cruel, permit me to forsake the light; could

I dispose of that portion of the divinity which they imparted to me; were it not a horrible crime for a mortal to destroy the work of the deity; ought my weakness to be condemned? should my soul, *Kanhuiscap*, be doomed to wander in the air? My troubles would be at an end.—But what do I say? Every day brings a new misfortune.

Receive, oh *Kanhuiscap*! receive in thy bosom my sorrowful complaints: pity and relieve them. Inform thyself, if possible, of the lot of *Zilia*; while my distracted heart demands her of the gods, of all nature, of myself.

LETTER V.



TO KANHUISCAP.

MAY the divine rays, that give us life, warm thee, *Kanhuisap*, with their gentle fire! Thou hast awakened in my heart the most flattering hope. From the progress thou hast already made in the Spanish language, thou art enabled to collect, that the first vessels which are expected on the coast where thou dwellest, come from the land of the Sun. By them thou wilt learn the fate of the only object for whom I breathe. Judge, my esteemed friend, with what impatience I look forward to the news of their arrival. Often have I already pictured to myself

self the extent of my felicity. *Zilia's* lot was revealed to me. I saw her, I see her yet, restored to the sanctuary of the Sun, and oppressed with no other grief, than my absence excited. I see her, embellishing the altars of that god, no less with her beauty, than the works of her hands. As a precious flower, which, still agitated by the breeze after the storm has subsided, admits the rays of the returning Sun, while the water that covers it serves only to increase its lustre; so *Zilia* seems more beautiful, and dear to my heart. Sometimes she appears to me like the Sun, whose dazzling beams, after a long intermission, more sensibly affect the sight, and announce to us the return of a fine day. At others, I fancy myself at her feet. I feel the same anxiety, emotion, pleasure, respect, tenderness, in short, every other sensation I experienced, when I really enjoyed her presence: I feel even those, *Kanhuischap*, with which her own heart was agitated. The illusion is rivetted to my soul; and yet how delightful to indulge it! My real evils are effaced by imaginary pleasures. I see *Zilia* happy: my felicity is complete.

Oh

Oh, my dear *Kanhuisap*! do not disappoint a hope which constitutes my bliss, and which may be destroyed by impatience alone. Let not the least delay, my generous friend, intercept my happiness. May thy *quipos*, knotted by the hands of gladness, be wafted to me on the wings of the wind! May the most exquisite perfumes, in return for thy friendship, be eternally diffused over thy gentle head!

LETTER VI.



TO KANHUISCAP.

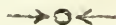
AH, my friend! with what delicious water hast thou extinguished the cruel fire that consumed my heart! Those anxieties which eternally distracted, that grief which overwhelmed me, thou hast caused to be succeeded by joy and tranquillity. I shall soon then again see my beloved *Zilia*. O, happiness almost unhopèd for! But she is still absent from me. Oh, cruel separation! In vain my heart springs to meet her: in vain my soul flies to mix with hers. There is still enough left to make me sensible of her absence.

Soon shall I again behold her; yet that comforting reflection, far from calming my inquietudes, augments my impatience. Separated from my life itself, conceive the torments I endure. Every instant do I expire: I breathe again only to wish. As the hunter, who, by running to allay, provokes the thirst that devours him; so does my hope irritate the flame that consumes me. The nearer I am to the possession of my *Zilia*, my apprehensions of losing her become the more lively. How often, my faithful friend, have we already been separated by a single moment! and that cruel moment, in the midst of my felicity, I still dread.

To an element, equally merciless and inconstant, all that is dear to me is consigned. *Zilia*, thou tellest me, quits the empire of the Sun; to visit these hateful regions. Long tossed upon the waves before she can reach me, what dangers, alas! will she not have to encounter! and how many more shall I not have to fear for her?—But whither does my passion hurry me? I am anticipating evils, when every thing presages happiness; happiness, whose very
idea—

idea——Ah, *Kanhuiscap*! what joy! what sensation, till then unknown—All my faculties disunite, in order to partake an equal pleasure. *Zilia* is presented to my eyes. I hear the tender accents of her voice: I embrace her. I die.

LETTER VII.



TO KANHUISCAP.

IF, subject to vicissitude, any thing, *Kanhuis-*
cap, could interrupt my joy, the time, to which
 thou referrest the completion of my happiness,
 could certainly diminish it. Before that period
 arises, the Sun must a hundred times enlighten
 the world ! Before the expiration of that im-
 mense space of time *Zilia* cannot possibly be
 restored to my arms !

Friendship strives in vain to mitigate the ri-
 gour of my fate. It cannot for a moment re-
 lax my impatience.

Alonso

Alonzo, whom the unjust *Capa-Inca* of the Spaniards has placed with my father upon the throne of the Sun; *Alonzo*, to whose charge the Spaniards have committed me, endeavours in vain to dissipate my grief. The friendship he shews me, his observations upon the manners of his countrymen, the amusements with which he seeks to divert my mind, the reflections to which I abandon myself, serve only to suspend the oppression of my soul.

Severed from the adorable *Zilia*, my affliction had hitherto prevented me from noticing the objects that surround me. I saw, I anticipated nothing but adversity. I seemed, as it were, to feel a pleasure in my misfortunes. I ceased to exist. How then could I observe any thing? But no sooner did I dedicate those moments to joy, which were due to it from love, than my sight was restored to me. What a scene presented itself to my eyes! Can I describe to thee how much it continues to surprise me? I find myself alone in the midst of a world, the existence even of which I never had suspected. I meet with men like myself. An equal asto-

F 3
nishment

nishment seizes both. Our eager looks are rivetted to each other. A croud of people, incessantly bustling and moving round in the same space, in which fate seems to have confined them; others, who are seldom seen, and who are distinguished from the laborious part only by their idleness; tumults, cries, quarrels, frays, frightful noises, and continual confusion, these were the first things I was capable of discerning.

My eyes, distracted by a variety of objects, could not distinguish any. I soon became sensible of it. I therefore resolved to confine my observations, and began by reflecting on what immediately struck me. It was thus, that *Alonzo's* house became the seat of my thoughts. The Spaniards, I see in it, appeared to me an object sufficiently important to detain my attention, and enable me to form a judgment, from their dispositions, of the rest of their countrymen. *Alonzo*, who resided for some time in our empire, and who is necessarily acquainted with our customs and language, assists me in my researches. This sincere friend, untainted with the prejudices of
his

his nation, frequently points out to me their folly and extravagance. "Behold that grave man," said he, the other day, "whom from his haughty looks, his curled mustachios, his deep-crowned cap, and numerous retinue, you would take for another *Huayna-Capac*.* He is nothing but a *Cusipata*, who promised our *Pachacamac* to be humble, meek, and poor. That person you see there (whom the liquor he is taking in such plentiful draughts will not presently leave the slightest trace of reason) is a judge, who in the course of an hour is to decide upon the lives or property of a dozen citizens. Observe this man, who is more enamoured of of himself, than of the lady with whom he is so earnestly engaged; who is ready to sink under the heat of the weather, and the perfumed dress he wears; who speaks with such emotion of the least trifle; whose debaucheries have sunk his eyes, turned his face pale, and destroyed even his voice; he is a warrior, who is about to lead into the field an army of thirty thousand men."

F 4

It

* The name of the great conqueror of Peru

It is thus, *Kanhuisap*, that, with the assistance of *Alonzo*, I dissipate at times the inquietudes that consume me. But, alas! how momentary the relief! The amusements of the mind universally give way to the affections of the heart.

LETTER VIII.



TO KANHUISCAP.

THE observations, which *Alonzo* led me to make upon the characters of his fellow-citizens, do not hinder me from occasionally glancing at his own. Though an admirer of the virtues of this sincere friend, I cannot forbear noticing his foibles. Wise, generous, and brave, he is nevertheless weak, and gives into the follies which he condemns in others. “Behold that respectable and formidable warrior,” said he to me; “that firm defender of his country, that man, who can command thousands by a single look, he is a slave in his own house, and.

and subservient to the most trifling caprices of his wife." Scarce had *Alonzo* uttered these words, when *Zulmira* entered. From the imperious air which she assumed, and the tender caresses of her father, I was persuaded that *Alonzo*, with respect to his daughter, was precisely in the same situation as the warrior, whose implicit submission to the humour of his wife he had just been condemning. Do not imagine, that he is the only Spaniard, who does not excuse in others his own weaknesses. I was walking the other day in a public garden, where I distinguished in the croud a little monster. He was about the size of a *Vicunna*.* His legs were shaped like an *Amaruc* ;† and his head was so sunk between his shoulders, that he could hardly turn it. I could not help commiserating the lot of this unfortunate object, when my attention was suddenly called off by loud peals of laughter. I directed my eyes to the spot whence they proceeded. Judge my surprise on discovering, that it was a man, nearly as deformed

* A kind of Indian goat,

† The Indian adder,

formed as the other, who was ridiculing the figure of the little monster, and exposing its singularity to the company. Is it possible we can be so blind to our own faults, even at the very moment when we are remarking the same in others! Is it possible, that the highest pitch of virtue can become a failing! *Alonzo*, governed as he is by his daughter, were unpardonable if he did not love her.

Heaven has endowed her with a lively imagination, an amiable person, and with beauty. The complacency of her deportment, the tenderness of her looks (notwithstanding the fire that animates them) the superior brightness of her complexion, persuade me she has a heart susceptible, but proud; meek, but impatient in the most trifling of her wishes.

What a difference, my friend, between her and *Zilia*! *Zilia*! who, almost unconscious of her beauty, would conceal it from the eyes of all but her conqueror: she, who is guided by modesty and candour, and whose heart, wholly taken up with the most pure and tender love, equally disclaims the suggestions of pride, and despises the shifts of art: she, who knows no
 16 other

other means to captivate, but to love: she, in short——What fierce flame consumes my soul! | *Zilia*, my beloved *Zilia*! wilt thou never be restored to me? What cruel cause still retards our felicity? Are the gods jealous of the happiness of a mortal? Ah, my dear friend! if the sweets of love are reserved to them only, why do they make us sensible to the power of beauty? Or, why, being the rulers of our hearts, do they suffer us to aim at an interdicted happiness?

LETTER

LETTER IX.

 TO KANHUISCAP.

WITHOUT some knowledge of the Spanish tongue, the observations excited by *Alonso*, could not be carried beyond a certain point; and those which I indulge myself could be but superficial. Desirous to divert my impatience, I requested I might have a master to instruct me in that language. The proficiency I have already made enables me to mix in conversations, to examine more minutely the genius and character of a nation, that seems to have been created only for the destruction of the earth, of which, notwithstanding, it affects to be the ornament. At first

I

I imagined, that these ambitious savages, (who are employed in contriving miseries for people to whom they are strangers) drank nothing but blood, saw the Sun only through a thick smoke, and whose sole business it was to forge instruments of death; for thou knowest as well as myself, that the thunder with which they struck us was invented by them. I expected to have met with in their cities nothing but artificers of thunder, soldiers training up to the course and to the field, princes stained with the blood they had already shed, and braving, to shed more, the most scorching heats, the most inclement seasons, fatigue, and death itself.

Thou wilt easily conceive my surprise, when, instead of that theatre of blood which my imagination had painted, I beheld the throne of mercy.

These people, who I think are cruel only to us, appear actuated by principles of gentleness and benevolence. The citizens seem to be united by the closest bonds of friendship. They never meet without exchanging marks of esteem, of amity, and even respect. These sentiments sparkle in their eyes, and regulate their
bodies.

bodies. They bow down before each other. In short, from their continual embraces, one might rather take them for one family happily cemented, than a whole nation.

Those warriors, who appeared to us so formidable, are here no other than old men, more pleasing than the rest; or young persons, gay, gentle, and obliging. A certain effeminacy which distinguishes all their actions, the interest that the least trifle excites in them, the pleasures which form their whole study, and the sentiments of humanity which they betray, would incline me to believe that they have two souls, one for society, and the other for war.

But, oh! what a real difference! Thou hast seen them, my friend, carry into the bosom of our desolated country, horror, dismay, and death. The groans of our wives expiring under their blows, the venerable age of our fathers, the pitiful cries which the tender organs of our children were scarcely capable of producing, the majesty of our altars, the pious awe that surrounds them, all conspired but to inflame their brutal barbarity.

I now behold them worshipping the very charms they had defaced, paying respect to age, stretching out a fostering hand to infancy, and venerating the shrines they had profaned. Is it possible, *Kanhuiscap*, that these can be the same men ?

LETTER X.



TO KANHUISCAP.

THE more I reflect on the capricious character of the Spaniards, the less able am I to discover the source whence it proceeds. This nation appears to be governed by one general principle. It has, however, a divinity nearly of the same name, called *Taste*. A select number of worshippers sacrifice every thing to it, even their tranquillity. There is one class, however, (and which is the most sincere) that does not even know what this god means: while the former, more conceited, gives definitions of it, equally unintelligible to others and themselves. According

According to many, it is a divinity that does not the less exist, because it is invisible. Everyone ought to feel its inspirations. We must agree with the sculptor, that it is concealed under a hideous mask, which appears to flutter upon the wings of a bat, and which a little child prettily enchains with a garland of flowers. A certain description of men, who are here called *petit-maitres*, will each oblige you to say, that this god is rather to be found in his waistcoat, than in that of his equals; and the proof he brings (which you cannot refuse) is, that he wears his waistcoat more or less open than others.

A few days ago, I went to see an edifice, of which a very extraordinary account had been given me. I no sooner came within sight of it, than I observed at the gate two parties of Spaniards, that seemed to be at open war with each other. I asked a person who attended me, what was the subject of their dispute. "It is," said he, "a matter of infinite importance. They are busy in deciding the reputation of this temple, and the rank it is to hold in future ages. Those people, you see, are connoisseurs. One side contends, that it is a mere in-

mass.

mass of stone, remarkable only for its enormous size: while the other insists, that this edifice is by no means enormous, and that it displays in all its parts the most refined taste."

Having quitted these connoisseurs, I entered the temple. I had gone but a few steps, before I observed, painted upon the wall, the figure of a venerable old man, whose majestic and noble features commanded respect. He appeared to be borne upon the winds, and surrounded by winged infants, whose eyes were directed towards the earth. "Whom does that picture represent?" said I. "It is the picture," replied an old *Cusipata*, (after several times bowing to the ground) "of the lord of the universe, who by one breath produced all things out of nothing. But," cried he suddenly, "have you remarked the precious stones which cover this altar?" He had not concluded these words, before the beauty of one of them had already struck me. It represented a man, whose head was encircled with laurel. I immediately begged to know what that man was, who had merited a place by the side of a deity. "It is," said the *Cusipata* (with a smile upon his countenance)

the

“the head of the most cruel and despicable prince that ever lived.” This answer threw me into a series of reflections, which the want of words prevented me from expressing. Recovered, in some measure, from my amazement, I was retiring with respectful steps out of the temple, when another object arrested my attention. I perceived covered with dust, in the obscurest place of all, the head of an old man. He had neither the majesty nor the countenance of the former. What was my astonishment, on being told, that it was the portrait of the same God, the creator of all things! The little respect, which the *Cusipata* seemed to have for this picture, prevented me from believing him, and I came away full of indignation at this impostor.

Is it possible, *Kanhuisap*, that the same men, in the same place, should trample under foot the very god whom they adore!

This is not the only absurdity, peculiar to the Spaniards: time frequently betrays them into a variety of others.

Why do they destroy a palace, which promised from its strength, to stand at least another century?

tury? Because, say they, it is not agreeable to the present taste. It was a master-piece in its time, and built at a vast expence : but, in these days, it is absolutely ridiculous.

Though the nation, in general, is a slave to this pretended taste, it is not necessary that every individual should possess it. There are people of taste here, who make others pay dearly for that which caprice ascribes to them. *Alonzo* remarked to me, the other day, one of those men, who have the credit of dressing with a certain elegance, which is looked upon, by his account, as a matter of the first importance. As a contrast to him, he shewed me at the same time another, who was remarkable for having no taste at all. I was doubting in whose favour to decide, when the company settled the point by laughing heartily at both. Whence, the only real difference I could discover between the man who has taste, and him who has none, is, that they deviate alike from nature, but by two different ways; and that this god, which they call *Taste*, takes up his abode, sometimes at the end of one of these roads, and sometimes of the other. Unhappy then the man who pursues
not

not the right path ! He is derided and despised ; till this god, by changing his abode, puts it in his power, at the moment when he least dreams of it, to treat others in the same manner.

Yet, *Kanhuisap*, according to the Spaniards, nothing is less variable than taste ; and if it has so often changed, it is only because their ancestors were unacquainted with that which constitutes true taste. Strongly do I suspect, that the same charge will descend to the last of their posterity.

LETTER XI.



TO KANHUISCAP.

CAN I, *Kanhuisap*, express to thee my astonishment, when I found that in this country, which I thought was inhabited by virtue itself, the people are virtuous only by constraint. It is the fear of punishment and of death, that alone inspires them with those sentiments, which I conceived nature had engraved in every heart. There are here immense volumes, entirely filled with prohibitory laws. There is no crime, however horrible, that has not its prescribed punishment; its punishment do I say? nay, even its precedent. Yes; it is less indeed
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an anticipating principle, than examples of enormities, that dictated the laws which prohibit them. To judge by these laws, is there a single crime which the Spaniards have not committed? They have a god, whom they have blasphemed, a king, whom they have outraged, a faith, which they have violated. They love, they respect, and yet destroy each other. They are friends, and they betray; they are cemented by their religion, and yet detest one another. Where then, I am continually asking myself, where is that harmony, which at first I found amongst them? that charming bond, with which friendship seemed to unite their hearts? Can I suppose, that it was formed only through fear, or through interest? But what amazes me most of all is the existence of laws. What! that a people, who could violate the most sacred rights of nature, and stifle her voice; would suffer themselves to be governed by the feeble voice of their ancestors! That these people, like their *Hamas*, could open their mouths to receive the bit, offered them by a man whose equal they had just murdered! Ah *Kanhuis-cap*, how wretched is the prince, who reigns over such a people! How many snares has he

to avoid ! He must be virtuous, if he wishes to preserve his authority ; and vice is continually before his eyes. Perjury surrounds him ; pride goes before him ; perfidy, with downcast looks, follows his footsteps ; he never beholds truth, but by the false glare of the torch of envy.

Such is the true picture of the croud that surrounds the prince, and which is called *the Court*. The nearer we approach the throne, the further we recede from virtue. We there see a vile sycophant next to the defender of his country ; a buffoon by the side of the ablest minister ; while perjury, escaped from the punishment it deserves, usurps the rank of probity : and yet, it is in the midst of these happy criminals, that the king dispenses justice. There, it should seem, indeed, that the laws are taught only by those who violate them. The judgment that condemns one criminal is often signed by another. For, however rigorous the laws may be, they are not equally so to all. In the closet of a judge, a beautiful woman falling in tears at his feet, or a man who brings with him several pieces of gold, can make the most guilty pure ; while the innocent expire in torture.

Ah; *Kanhuiscáp* ! how happy are the children of the Sun, whom virtue alone presides over! Strangers to vice, they fear no punishment ; and as virtue is their judge, nature is their only law.

LETTER XII.



TO KANHUISCAP.

THE first point of view, in which we consider things, is seldom the most just. What a difference, *Kanhuisap*, between this people, and what they at first appeared to me! All their virtue is nothing but a light veil, through which we distinguish the features of those, who wish to conceal themselves. Under the dazzling brightness of their fairest actions, one may always discover the seeds of some vice: like the rays of the Sun, which, while they seem to give a new lustre to the colour of the rose, enable us more clearly to discern the thorns beneath.

An insupportable pride is the source of that amiable union, which had charmed me so much at first. Those tender embraces, that constrained respect, proceed from the same principle. The least inflexion of the body is here regarded as a duty, which is due alone to rank and friendship; while the basest characters in this kingdom, those, who have the strongest prejudices and aversions, mutually render to each other this false homage.

A great man passes before you; he takes off his hat; this is an honour: he smiles upon you; this is a favour. But it is not considered, that this honourable salute, this courteous smile, must be purchased by a thousand pains and submissions: nay, it is necessary to become a slave, in order to obtain honours.

Pride has here another veil, namely, gravity; that varnish, which gives an air of reason to the most absurd actions. The same person would be highly respected and esteemed, were he weak enough to restrain his vivacity, who, however distinguished for his prudence and his wisdom, is regarded as a fool. To be wise is nothing; to appear so, every thing.

“That

“That man,” said *Alonzo* to me the other day, “whose talents and discretion correspond with the benignity that is painted upon his countenance ; that almost universal genius has been excluded from the most important offices, for having once been betrayed into a laugh.”

Thou must not therefore be surprised, *Kanhuiscap*, that they commit here the most extravagant absurdities with the utmost carelessness. So that this affected gravity makes but little impression upon me. I perceive the vanity of him who assumes it; and the more he esteems himself, the more I despise him. Are merit and cheerfulness, then, incompatible with each other? No; reason never suffers by pleasures, which the soul alone enjoys.

LETTER XIII.



TO KANHUISCAP.

I CANNOT help repeating to thee, *Kanhuis-*
cap, that there appears to be something undefi-
 nable in the character of the Spaniards. . Every
 day produces some fresh absurdity. What, for
 instance, wilt thou think of the following?
 These people have a God whom they worship:
 but so far from making him any offerings, it is
 this God that nourishes them.* No *Curacas*†
 are

* It is necessary to remark, that it is a Peruvian who is speak-
 ing, and who has but an imperfect notion of our worship.

† Statues of different metals, and differently dressed, which
 the Peruvians placed in the temples, by way of tokens to ex-
 press the wants of those who offered them.

are found in their temples, as symbols of their wants. In short, there are certain times in the day, when the temples might be taken for deserted palaces.

Some old women, however, remain in them almost the whole day. The air of devotion which they assume, and the tears they shed, at first prepossessed me in their favour; while the contempt, with which they were treated, surprised and affected me. *Alonzo* soon convinced me of my error. "How little," said he, "are you acquainted with these women, who have gained your esteem! One of those you see is hired by abandoned females to barter their charms. That other sacrifices her fortune and tranquillity to the ruin of her family."

Unnatural mothers! Some intrust their children to people, to whom they would not intrust the most trifling jewel, that they may come here and adore a God, who, as they themselves admit, enjoins nothing so strongly as the education of those very children.

Others, out of conceit with the pleasures of the world (merely because they can no longer
 G 5 enjoy

enjoy them) here, in the presence of their God, make a virtue of vices which they have discovered in others.

How difficult is it, *Kanhuisca*, for these barbarous nations to be consistent with themselves! Nor can their religion be more easily reconciled with nature. The conduct of their god, in respect to them, is no less capricious than theirs towards him.*

They acknowledge, with us, a God Creator. He differs it is true from ours, being nothing but a mere substance; or, to speak more properly, an assemblage of all perfections. No limits can be prescribed to his power; no variation can be imputed to him. Wisdom, goodness, justice, omnipotence, and immutability, compose his essence. This God always did exist, and will exist to eternity. Such is the definition, which the *Cusipatas* of this country have given me of him, who are ignorant of nothing that has happened since, or even before, the creation of the world.

It

* It must be remembered, throughout, that a Peruvian is speaking.

It was this God, who placed mankind upon the earth, as in a garden of pleasure. He plunged them afterwards into an abyss of misery and pains; and then he destroyed them. One man was however saved from the general wreck, who repopled the earth with a race, still more wicked than the former. Yet God, instead of punishing them, chose from amongst them a certain number, to whom he dictated his laws, and promised to send his Son. But this ungrateful people, forgetting the goodness of God, sacrificed that Son, the dearest pledge of his tenderness. Having brought upon themselves, by so foul a crime, the displeasure of God, this nation experienced the effect of his vengeance. Wandering incessantly from country to country, the whole universe became a witness of its chastisement. It was upon other men (till then more worthy of divine wrath) that this Son, so long promised, lavished his beneficence. It was for them he instituted new laws, which differed but in few instances from the former.

Such, my wise friend, was the conduct of that God towards mankind. How is it to be reconciled with his essence? He is omnipotent, immu-

table. He created these people to make them happy; and yet no real good exempts them from the infirmities of human nature. He wishes them to be happy; while his laws prohibit the enjoyment of those pleasures which he has made for them, and for which they themselves are made. He is just; and yet he does not punish in the children the same crimes, which he punished so severely in the fathers. He is good; and his mercy is exhausted almost as soon as his severity.

Impressed as they are with the goodness, omnipotence, and wisdom of this God, thou wilt believe perhaps, *Kanhuisap*, that the Spaniards are faithful to his laws, and implicitly obey them: If such be thy opinion, how art thou deceived! Abandoned continually, and without scruple, to vices prohibited by those laws, they make it appear, either that the justice of this God, in not punishing the actions which he forbids, is too limited; or, that his will is too severe in forbidding actions, which his goodness withholds him from punishing.

LETTER XIV.

TO KANHUISCAP.

THOU mayest possibly have thought, my faithful friend, that time has at length abated the impatience which consumed my heart. I excuse thy error; I was myself the cause of it. The reflections, to which thou hast seen me abandon myself of late, could in thy opinion proceed only from a tranquil soul. Do not indulge an error that wrongs me. Impatience often borrows from a seeming tranquillity the most cruel weapons. I know it too well by experience. My mind contemplated with a doubtful eye the different objects that surrounded

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me;

me; but my heart was no less a prey to impatience. *Zilia*, ever present to my sight, nourished my anxiety, even in those moments, when my philosophy appeared to thee to promise me consolation.

The sciences and study may occasionally divert, but they cannot extinguish the affections of the soul; and had they indeed that power, how could they repress the ardour of a passion, founded upon virtue, and ratified by reason? My love, thou knowest, is not one of those transient vapours, engendered by caprice, and which it dissipates the next minute. Reason, that taught me to know my heart, told me it was formed for the purest affection. By the light of its torch I first perceived Love. Could I forbear following it? It shewed me beauty in *Zilia's* eyes. It made me sensible of her power, her charms, and my felicity; and so far from opposing my happiness, reason, I was taught by reason itself, frequently consisted only in exciting pleasures, and securing the permanency of their enjoyment.

Judge then, *Kanhuisap*, whether philosophy were capable of diminishing my passion. The
reflections

reflections I make upon the manners of the Spanish women serve but to increase it. The disparity of virtue, of beauty, of affection, which I remark between them and *Zilia*, only renders our separation the more cruel and distressing.

That native simplicity, that amiable frankness, those soft transports to which she gave up her soul, are here veils only to cover licentiousness and perfidy. To conceal the most lively ardour, in order to evince that which they do not feel, so far from being punished as a vice, is considered a great talent. To attempt pleasing an individual is a crime; not to please all, a disgrace. Such are the principles of virtue, that they instil into the hearts of the women here. As soon as one of them has the happiness (if it be a happiness) to be distinguished as a beauty, she must prepare herself to receive the homage of a croud of adorers, whose worship she is to reward by at least one glance of the eye every day. When the person, thus distinguished, is what they call a *coquette*, the first step she takes is to find out the richest of her admirers. This done, her whole study, every allurement must be exercised to ensnare him. She succeeds; she
marries

marries him; and then she consults her heart. Her beauty now assumes a new lustre. She goes every day into the temples and public places; where, through a veil that saves her blushes and her downcast looks, she surveys with confidence the faithful crowd.

Alvarez and *Pedro* soon divide her heart. She hesitates between them: she decides in favour of the former, conceals her choice from both, and still suffers them to sigh on. Without discouraging *Pedro*, she makes *Alvarez* happy: she grows tired of him, and returns to *Pedro*, whom she shortly after abandons for another. This is not the most arduous of her enterprises. She must persuade all the world that she loves her husband, and must make him sensible of his happiness, in possessing so affectionate, so discreet a wife.

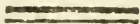
The public has also a duty to perform, which it does with great exactness; that is, to remind the husband that he is married to a fine woman.

These contagious examples seem even to have affected the heart of *Zulmira*. I think, that though yet a child, she is tainted with the dangerous

gerous ambition of pleasing. The most trifling of her actions, the most careless of her looks, betray a something that seems to come from the heart. Her conversations abound in compliments her eyes are languishing, and her plaintive voice is lost frequently in tender sighs.

Thus it is, *Kanhuisca*, that, by different mysteries, virtue has here the appearance of vice; while vice is concealed under the mask of virtue.

LETTER XV.



TO KANHUISCAP.

O TRUTH, which still amazes me ! O surprising depth of knowledge ! The Sun, *Kanhuisap*, that master-piece of nature, the earth,* that fruitful mother, are not divinities. A Creator different from ours produced them ; and by a single look he can destroy them. Confounded in a vast chaos, enveloped in an indigested matter, he drew, from the bosom of confusion, these luminous stars and the people who

* The Peruvians worshipped the earth under the name of *Manabza*.

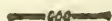
who adore them. To all matter he gave a prolific virtue. At his voice, the Sun diffused light : the moon received his rays, and transmitted them to us. The earth brought forth, and nourished by its moisture, those trees and animals we worship. The sea, which a God only could subdue, affords us fish for our sustenance ; and man, created lord of the universe, reigned over every creature.

These are the mysteries, my dear friend, from our ignorance of which proceeded all our calamities. Had we known (acquainted like the Spaniards with the secrets of nature) that the thunder, which they hurled upon us, was nothing but a mass of matter, contained within the bowels of our own country ; that *Yalpör* even, that terrible god, was a mere vapour which the earth produced, and whose fall was directed by chance ; that those fierce *Hamas*, which flew before us, could have been made tractable to our will ; had we known these things, should we, the peaceful witnesses of the greatness of our ancestors, should we tamely have served as a triumph to these barbarians?

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It should seem indeed, *Kanhuisca*, that nothing in nature is concealed from these people. Her most secret actions are known to them. They penetrate equally into the highest heavens, and the most profound abyss. Nor does it any longer appear in the power of nature to change what they have once foreseen.

LETTER XVI.



TO KANHUISCAP.

COULD I have supposed, *Kanhuisap*, that these people, whom reason itself appears to enlighten, should be slaves to the sentiments of their ancestors? An opinion once adopted, however erroneous it may be, must be implicitly pursued. It cannot be disputed without the risk of being taxed, at least, with singularity.

Natural sense, that voice so distinct which we continually hear; that blazing torch, is extinguished by a prejudice; a tyrant, who, though detested, is not the less formidable; a cheat

cheat, which, though understood, is not the less dangerous. This tyrant, however, might be easily subdued, were he not in league with one, still more dangerous than himself, namely, superstition. It is this false light, which guides most of the people here, which makes them prefer fabulous opinions to the force of truth. A man, who shall frequent the temples several times a day, let him but assume an hypocritical and constrained countenance, to whatever vice he may be addicted, whatever crime he may commit, will be generally esteemed : while the most virtuous, who shall have thrown off the yoke of prejudice, will meet only with contempt. The man of sense must not listen to prejudices. The man, without prejudice, passes here for a man without piety. It is not sufficient to be what they call *wise* : to this must be added the title of *devout*, or they confer on you that of *profligate*. The distributors of the public esteem, those men so despicable in themselves, never admit of an intermediate class. To be neither devout, nor profligate, is to them a paradox. Such a man appears to their deluded eyes a kind of amphibious animal.

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The Spaniards have two divinities, one that presides over virtue, and the other over vice. If without affectation, you content yourself with sacrificing inwardly to the former, they very soon accuse you of worshipping the latter. It is not that the empire of virtue is despotic. Her subjects have much to dread from the divinity of vice. They are always obliged to appear in public with weapons fit to encounter him, and which are frequently unable to oppose him with success. A man was taken up the other day, who had been guilty of several crimes; and it was publicly declared, that the devil must have seduced him to the practice of such enormities. He wore about his neck, however, a sort of cord, which had been consecrated by the *Cusipatas* to the god of virtue. In one hand he held another cord, strung with certain beads, which had the power of driving away the instigator of his crimes: and, in the other hand, the dagger that he had used in committing them.

I was yesterday taken to a large place, where a prodigious number of people seemed transported with joy, on beholding several of their fellow-
creatures

creatures burnt alive. From the strange dresses worn by the unhappy sufferers, and the air of satisfaction betrayed by the sacrificers (who led them as it were in triumph) I concluded they were victims, which these savages were offering to their Gods. What was my astonishment on learning, that the God of these barbarians abominated the shedding, not only of human blood, but that of beasts! With what horror was I seized when I reflected, that it was to the God of mercy these depraved priests were making such odious sacrifices! Do these *Cusipatas* design by them to appease their God? Should not the expiation be still more displeasing to him, than the crimes which incensed him against them? Oh, *Kanhuiscap*, what a deplorable infatuation!

LETTER XVII.



TO KANHUISCAP.

THAT thirst after knowledge, my faithful friend, which thou betrayest, equally pleases and perplexes me. Thou askest me for proofs and explanations of those discoveries, which I communicated to thee. Thy doubts are excusable; but I cannot satisfy what thou requirest. A short time since I could have done it. I had less difficulty in conceiving things, than in committing them to writing; while my mind, more ready than my hand, found conviction where it now finds nothing but uncertainty. Two days ago, the earth appeared to me to be round:

round: to day I am told that it is flat. Of these two ideas my reason admits only one that is indisputable; which is, that the earth cannot be, at the same time, both flat and round. Thus it is, that error is frequently the instrument of conviction.

A few days since, I was told by one of those men they call philosophers, that the Sun moves round the earth. I believed it: he proved it to me. Another came soon after, and told me the reverse. I sent for the former, and took upon myself to decide the point between them. By what I could collect from their arguments, it were possible for both those planets to make this revolution; and that the ancestor of one of the disputants was an *Alguazil*.

This is all the information I acquired from my acquaintance with these people, whose learning at first amazed me: The particular respect that is shewn them is one of those things, which excite my astonishment. Is it possible, that so enlightened a nation should entertain such a high esteem for persons, who have no other merit than that of thinking! They must
certainly

certainly consider reason as something very uncommon.

A man has a singular way of thinking, says little, never laughs, is always disputing; poor, yet proud, he cannot distinguish himself by costly clothes; he supplies this defect, and makes himself conspicuous by his rags. This is a philosopher, and he is privileged to be assuming.

Another, who is young, would turn philosophy into a court-lady. He conceals her under a rich garb, paint, and gewgaws. She is a lively coquette, whose approach is announced by perfumes. Those, who have been accustomed to judge from appearances, no longer know her. The philosopher is a mere coxcomb. To suspect him of thinking were to accuse him of consistency.

“*Zais*,” said *Alonzo*, “had the vapours. She must furnish a pretext. Philosophy appeared a plausible one to *Zais*. She omitted nothing that might make her pass for a philosopher. She fancied herself one already. Caprice, misanthropy, and pride, helped her to that distinction. Nothing was now wanting, but to

find a lover as singular as herself. She succeeded.

Zais and her lover form an academy. Their castle is an observatory. Though far advanced in years, *Zais*, in her garden, is Flora: in her balcony, she is Urania. Of her lover, equally fantastical and disagreeable, she makes a perfect Celadon. What is wanting to complete so ridiculous a scene? Spectators."

Philosophy, *Kanhuisap*, is here less the art of thinking, than the art of thinking extravagantly. All the world are philosophers. To appear so, however, is not, as thou perceivest, a very easy matter.

LETTER XVIII.



TO KANHUISCAP.

OF all that strikes me with astonishment, *Kanhuisap*, nothing surprises me more, than the conduct of the Spaniards towards their wives. The great pains they take to conceal them under a prodigious quantity of clothes would almost persuade me, that they are rather ravishers than husbands. What reason could they have for it, but the fear, lest the rightful owners should claim the property, which they had stolen from them? What shame do they find in adorning themselves with the gifts of love?

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These barbarians are strangers to the pleasure of being seen in company with those they love; of manifesting to the whole universe the excellence of their choice, or the value of their conquests, of burning in public with those fires, which were kindled in private, and of witnessing in a thousand hearts the perpetuity of that homage, which one alone is incapable of paying to beauty. *Zilia!* O my dear *Zilia!* Unjust and cruel gods, why do you still deprive me of her sight? My looks, rivetted to hers by tenderness and pleasure, should teach these uncivilized men, that there are no ornaments more precious than the chains of love.

I believe, however, that it is jealousy, which urges the Spaniards thus to conceal their wives; or rather, the perfidy of the wives, which imposes upon the husbands this tyranny. The conjugal oath is that which is sworn with the greatest facility. Can we therefore be surprised that it is so little kept? Two rich heirs are daily to be found here, that marry without the least attachment, live together without affection, and part without regret. This situation is more unhappy, than thou mayest per-
haps

haps imagine. Though to be loved by their wives is not a happiness, it is an infelicity to be hated by them.

Chastity, which is enjoined by their religion; is not more scrupulously observed than conjugal affection, or, at least only in appearance.

There are here, as in the city of the Sun, virgins consecrated to the divinity. They converse, however, familiarly with the men, and are separated from them only by a grate. Yet I cannot conceive the meaning of this separation; for, if they have power enough to preserve their virtue, in spite of their continual intercourse with men, of what service is a grate? And if love once enters into their hearts, how weak must be the resistance of a separation that inflames it, and which suffers the eyes to act, and the heart to speak!

A kind of *Cusipatas* are assiduous in their attendance upon these virgins, who are called *muns*; while under the specious mask of inspiring them with principles of the purest devotion, they create and cherish in them those sentiments of love, to which they are a prey. Art, which appears to be banished from their

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breasts,

breasts, is not, however, from their dress and their actions. A certain fold which the veil must assume, a downcast look, and a studied attitude, are sufficient to employ, for one fourth of a year, the time, the pains, and even the vigils of a nun. The eyes of a nun too are more intelligent than those of others. They are a picture which represents every sentiment of the heart. Tenderness, innocence, languor, rage, grief, despair, and pleasure, are all there expressed; and if the curtain is dropped for a moment over the painting, it is only to give time for another to supply its place. What a difference between the preceding look of a nun, and that which succeeds it! All this management, however, is the work of one man. A *Cusipata* has the superintendence of a house of virgins. Each is desirous to please him. They become coquettes; and the director, how unpolished soever he may be, is himself obliged to assume an air of coquetry. Gratitude exacts it from him; while, sure of pleasing, he contrives new schemes to conciliate affection. He succeeds: he becomes, at length, as it were, adored. Thou wilt be able thyself to

to judge by the following circumstance. I have been told, that one of these virgins covered the head of an image of the divinity of this country with the hair of a monk. I have likewise seen a letter, written by a nun to Father T——, to the following effect:

“ Jesus, my father, how unjust are you! God is my witness, that father *Ange* does not for a moment occupy my thoughts; and that, far from being charmed to ecstasy by his sermon (with which you reproach me) during the whole of his discourse, my heart and my mind were devoted to you only. Yes, my father, one single word from your lips makes a stronger impression upon my heart, on that heart you so little know, than all that father *Ange* could say to me for whole years, even though it were in Madame’s little parlour, and he fancied himself talking with her—— If my eyes seemed to sparkle, it was because I was with you while he was preaching. O, could you dive into my soul, that you might satisfy yourself of the truth of what I write! Yet you came to the

parlour, and never even asked for me. Should you have forgot me? Did you no longer remember——You did not yesterday once look at me during prayers. Would heaven afflict me to that degree, as to deprive me of the consolations which I receive from you? In the name of God, father, do not forsake me in that lamentable state, in which I am plunged. Wretched and reduced, I deserve at least your pity; and if you do not take compassion on me, you will shortly scarcely know the unfortunate *Theresa*.

You will receive from the keeper of our turning-box an almond cake of my making. I enclose, in this letter, a billet that sister *A*—— wrote to father Don *X*——. I contrived to intercept it. It will afford you, I think, some amusement. Ah! that——The bell rings. Adieu.”

After this, *Kanhuisap*, thou must admit, that the Spaniards are no less ridiculous in their amours, than remorseless in their cruelties. *Alonzo's*, I believe, is the only house, where
good

good sense and integrity reign. I know not what to think, however, of *Zulmira's* looks. They are too tender to be wholly the effect of art, and too studied to proceed from the soul.

LETTER XIX.



TO KANHUISCAP.

TO think is a trade ; to know ourselves, a talent. It is not given to every man, *Kanhuis-cap*, to read his own heart. There is here a certain class of philosophers, who alone possess that privilege ; or rather, the art of confounding this faculty. Far from devoting themselves to correct the passions, they are satisfied with merely knowing the source whence they proceed ; and this knowledge, which should make the wicked blush, serves only to shew them, that they have one merit more, the unprofitable gift of discovering their faults.

The metaphysicians (as these philosophers are called) distinguish in man three principles, the
soul,

soul, the mind, and the heart; and all their skill goes only to determine, from which of the three proceeds such and such action. This point once established, their pride is inconceivable. Virtue appears to be no longer made for them: It is sufficient that they have ascertained from whence it arises; like those people, who cannot fancy a liquor, however excellent, the moment they know that it comes from a country little celebrated.

By the same rule, a metaphysician, puffed up with a learning which he thinks most profound, omits no opportunity of displaying it. If he writes to his mistress, his letter is nothing but a mere analysis of the least faculties of his soul. The mistress considers herself obliged to answer him in the same style; and they perplex each other with chimerical distinctions and expressions, which, though sanctioned by custom, it does not render intelligible.

Thy own reflections upon the manners of the Spaniards will easily lead thee to those I have here made.

Would that my heart were free, my generous friend! I could more forcibly express to thee those

sentiments, which, at present, are arranged in no better method, than an agitated mind is capable of giving them. The time approaches, when my troubles will be at an end. *Zilia* will at length bless my impatient eyes. The very idea bewilders my imagination. I fly to meet her. I behold her participating my anxieties and my pleasures. Tears of tenderness flow down our cheeks. United again after so long an absence, after so many misfortunes—— What a cruel pang, *Kanhuisap*, shot into my soul! In what a horrible situation will she find me! The wretched slave of a barbarian (in whose fetters she herself perhaps is bound) at the court of a haughty conqueror, will she recollect her lover? Can she believe that he still breathes? She is in bondage. Will she believe, that obstacles, sufficiently strong, could —— *Kanhuisap*, what ought I to expect? When I was worthy of her, thou, cruel God! didst snatch her from my arms. Wilt thou suffer me to behold in her again only a fresh witness of my humiliation? And thou, barbarous element, that restorest to me the object of my affection, wilt thou restore to me my glory?

LETTER

LETTER XX.



TO KANHUISCAP.

WHAT cruel power snatches me from the darkness of the grave? What deceitful pity makes me behold again the loathsome light? My misfortunes, *Kanhuisap* are renewed with my days, and my strength is augmented with the weight of my affliction——*Zilia* is no more—— Oh, dreadful despair! Oh, bitter remembrance! *Zilia* is no more—— and I still breathe! while these hands, that my grief ought to tie up, are still capable of forming those knots, which distraction suggests, which tears bedew, and which despair conveys to thee!

In

In vain has the Sun performed one third of his course, since thou gavest the death-blow to my heart. In vain has despondency, annihilation, even to this day, usurped my soul. My grief, ineffectually repressed, becomes only the more lively. I have lost *Zilia*! An immense space of time seems to divide us, and I lose her even at this moment. The dreadful stroke that robbed me of her, the treacherous element that intombs her, all present themselves to my distracted mind. I see my *Zilia* floating on the hateful waves——The Sun is eclipsed with horror. The sea, which opens itself, conceals its crime from that divinity; but it cannot hide it from me. Through the waters I behold the corpse of *Zilia*—her eyes—her bosom—a livid paleness——Oh, my friend!——inexorable death!——death, that flies from me! Gods, more cruel in your goodness than in your severity! Gods, who suffer me still to live, will you never unite those whom you cannot divide?

In vain, *Kanhuiscap*, do I call on death. He comes not to my relief: the barbarian is deaf to my voice, and reserves his darts for those who avoid them.

Zilia,

Zilia, my dear *Zilia*, listen to my cries; behold my streaming tears: thou art no more; I live only to shed them: O, that I could drown myself in the bitter torrent——that I could—— Thou art no more, soul of my soul! Thou —— my hands refuse me their aid —— my grief overwhelms me —— frightful despair —— tears —— love —— a strange chillness —— *Zilia* —— *Kanhuisap* —— *Zilia*! ——

LETTER XXI.

 TO KANHUISCAP.

HOW astonished wilt thou be, *Kānhuisca*, when these knots, which my hands are scarcely capable of forming, shall apprise thee I still exist! My grief, my despair, the long interval of my silence, all conspired to tell thee I was no more. Cease to indulge those sorrows, that are due to friendship, to esteem, and to misfortune; but let not the preservation of my days make thee deplore my weakness. In vain should my own fate have been involved in that of *Zilia*. The Gods, who should have pardoned the crime which would have terminated my.

my existence, deprived me of the power of committing it.

Overwhelmed with grief, I scarcely perceived the approach of a dissolution, which threatened, at length, to put an end to my misfortunes. I fell into a dangerous fit of sickness, which would have carried me to my grave, had not the unwelcome assistance of *Alonzo* protracted the period of my days.

I breathe ; but it is only to be a prey to the most cruel torments. In my present dreadful situation, every thing is irksome to me. The friendship of *Alonzo*, the grief of *Zulmira*, their kind offices, their tears, all concur but to oppress me. Abstracted in the midst of society, I notice the objects around me, only to avoid them. May a friend less unfortunate, *Kanhuis-cap*, be the reward of thy virtue ! Too unhappy a lover to be alive to the sentiments of friendship, can I relish its sweets, when love abandons me to the most bitter anxieties ?

LETTER XXII.



TO KANHUISCAP.

FRIENDSHIP, *Kanhuisap*, has at length restored me to thee, and to myself. Too sensibly affected by my grief, *Alonzo* would dissipate or share it with me. For this purpose, he took me to a country-house, a few miles from Madrid. I had there the satisfaction of meeting with every thing, congenial to the oppression of my heart. A wood, a short distance from *Alonzo's* palace, has long been the witness of my secret sorrows. Every object I there beheld was calculated to feed my despair. Tremendous rocks; high mountains, destitute of

of verdure; thick streams, gliding over their muddy beds; darksome pines, whose gloomy branches seemed to touch the clouds; parched grass; withered flowers; ravens, and serpents; these were alone conscious to my tears.

Alonzo, in spite of me, soon drew me away from these melancholy scenes. Then it was I discovered, how much our troubles may be alleviated by sympathy, and how much I owed to the tender solicitude of *Zulmira* and *Alonzo*. Where shall I find colours, *Kanhuisap*, sufficiently lively to paint to thee the inquietudes, which my misfortunes excite in them? *Zulmira*, the tender *Zulmira*, honours them with her tears. Her affliction is nearly equal to my own. Pale and dejected, her eyes sympathize with mine in floods of grief; while *Alonzo* deploras my unhappy fate.

LETTER

LETTER XXIII.

TO KANHŪISCAP.

ZULMIRA, whose every care was devoted to the unhappy *Aza*; *Zulmira*, who shared my misfortunes, who trembled for my days, is herself almost no more. Every instant augments her danger, and threatens her dissolution.

Yielding, at length, to the tenderness and entreaties of her father, (inconsolable at her feet without the hope of relieving her) and yielding perhaps still more to the movements of her own heart, *Zulmira* spoke. It is I, it is *Aza*, the perpetual victim of misfortune, who has given her the mortal blow; it is that wretched
Aza,

Aza, whose lacerated heart knows nothing but despair, and whose love has converted the whole mass of his blood into a deadly poison.

I rob a father, and a friend, of his darling *Zulmira*. She loves me; she dies. *Atonzo* will soon follow her. *Zilia* no longer breathes.

“I shared thy griefs,” said the afflicted father to me, “do thou sympathize in my troubles. Restore, unhappy man, (whose sufferings I commiserate, even at the very instant I implore thee to relieve my own), restore to me my life, and my child. The most amiable of virtues cannot prejudice thy love. Come; follow me”——At these words, which were interrupted by the fulness of his heart, he led me into his daughter’s room. Affected, overcome, I trembling entered. The paleness of death was spread over her countenance; but her dim eyes, the moment she beheld me, recovered their brightness; my presence seemed to give new life to the unfortunate *Zulmira*.

“I die,” said she to me, with a faltering voice; “I shall never see thee more: that is the sole object of my regret. At least, *Aza* while I yet exist, I can tell thee how much I
love

love thee. I can ——— Yes; remember that *Zulmira* carries with her to the grave the love which she could not conceal from thee; which her looks, her heart, have so often expressed; and which thy indifference, at last ——— But I cannot reproach thee for it: thy affection would have proved thy inconstancy. Devoted to another, death could not tear thee from her; nor shall it ever deprive me of the love I bear thee. I prefer it to the cure of a disease which I encourage; of a disease ——— *Aza* ———” She could no more, but stretched out her hand towards me. Her strength failed her; her eyes closed. While I was reproaching myself with being the cause of her death, and adding my offices to those of her distracted father, other means recalled her to life. Her eyes opened; and though yet dim; they were fixed upon me, and expressed the most tender love. “*Aza! Aza!*” she repeated, “do not hate me.” I threw myself at her feet, melted with her condition. A sudden joy gleamed upon her countenance; but unable to sustain the tumults of her soul, she swooned again. They removed me from
her

her presence, in order to relieve the agitations that destroyed her.

What canst thou think, *Kanhuiscap*, of the new misfortunes which have befallen me? Of the cruel pangs I occasion those, to whom I owe every thing? This fresh grief is just added to the many, which attend me in the solitary deserts, where love, despair, and death, are my inseparable companions.

LETTER XXIV.

 TO KANHUISCAP.

ALONZO's situation, my dear friend, is changed. The grief, which oppressed him, is succeeded by joy. *Zulmira* is rescued from the grave. She is no more that *Zulmira*, whom pining had reduced to the point of dissolution. Her eyes, assuming their native lustre, reflect the graces and beauty of her youth.

While I admire her renovated charms (canst thou believe it?) so far from repeating to me her passion, she seems agitated, on the contrary; at the confession which escaped her.

Her

Her eyes are cast down, if they happen to meet mine. Though my inquietudes are occasionally suspended, alas! how momentary is the calm! *Zilia*, my dear *Zilia*, can I divest myself of my grief? Forgive the moments I have stolen from it. I will devote to it hereafter all those, which my misfortune will permit me.

Do not imagine, *Kanhuisap*, that the apprehensions, which *Alonzo* expresses to me for *Zulmira*, can ever shake my constancy. In vain does he represent to me the empire of *Aza* over his daughter's heart, the joy that our union would give him, and the inevitable death which would attend our separation. I remain silent before this unhappy father. My heart, true to the object of my tenderness, is firm and immovable. No; in vain does *Alonzo*, ready to depart for that unfortunate country, which will never more be visited by *Zilia*, offer me the power, that his unjust sovereign has given him over my people. It were to acknowledge a tyrant, to exercise his authority. Fetters may bind my arms, but they never shall enchain my heart. I shall for ever bear that hatred to the

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barbarous chief of the Spaniards, which I owe the ruler of a nation, that was the cause of all my calamities, and those of my unhappy country.

LETTER XXV.

TO KANHUISCAP.

MY eyes are opened, *Kanhuiscap*. The fires of love yield, without being extinguished, to the torch of reason.

Oh, immortal flames that consume my breast! thou, whose dear image nothing can efface from my mind; thou, whom a cruel destiny tears from me for ever; do not be offended, if the thirst of vengeance excites me to betray you.

No longer tell me, *Kanhuiscap*, of the duties I owe to my people, and to my father. Speak to me no more of the tyranny of the Spaniards.

Can I forget my misfortunes, and their crimes? They have cost me too dear. That bitter remembrance inflames my fury. It is done; I submit. I go to be united to *Zulmira*: *Alonzo*, I have given thee my word. Is it then a crime to let *Zulmira* indulge an error that is pleasing to her? She thinks, that she triumphs over my heart. Ah! far from undeceiving her, let her enjoy her imaginary happiness. Let her—— It is by this means alone, that I can avenge, at once, my oppressed people and myself. The instant our union is consummated, I will depart for the land of the Sun; that desolated land, whose calamities thou describest to me. There will I fulminate the vengeance, whose violent transports I now suppress. On a perfidious nation will I wreak my fury. Reduced to the vile condition of a slave, and obliged, for the first time, to play the hypocrite, I go to punish the Spaniards for my dissimulation, and their crimes; while *Alonzo's* family shall enjoy every thing that a grateful heart can bestow, and every homage which is due to virtue.

LETTER

LETTER XXVI.

TO KANHUISCAP.

WERT thou, *Kanhuisap*, one of those men who are blinded by prejudice, I could easily anticipate thy surprise, when an *Inca* informs thee, that he no longer adores the Sun. I could fancy thee complaining to that luminary for suffering me to enjoy his rays; and to thyself, for the solicitude with which thou conveyest to me thy sentiments. Thou wouldst wonder, that, false to my God, one spark of friendship, of that virtue which knows no crime, could still glow in my breast. But fortified against prejudices, which thou wert

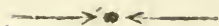
taught to esteem as virtues, thou lookest for nothing in a Peruvian, but the love of his country, of virtue, and of sincerity. From thee I expect more just reproaches. Thou wilt perhaps be surprised; and with some reason, to see me forsake a worship which appeared to me barbarous, and to find me a zealous advocate for a religion, whose absurdities I related to thee. The same objection struck myself; but how little did it avail when I was told, that the very God, whose ordinances and dispensations I had daringly blasphemed, was the author of our being! Of what consequence, indeed, is the particular form of worship, if it be enjoined by him to whom it is paid? Upon this principle it was, that I blushed not to conform to ceremonies, which I had formerly condemned. How awful, how sublime, are the works of the Supreme Being! Couldst thou read, *Kanhuis-cap*, those divine books that have been put into my hands, what wisdom, what majesty, what depth, wouldst thou discover in them! Thou wouldst easily trace the work of the Divinity. Those invincible contradictions, which I originally found in the dispensations of that
power,

power, are there clearly explained and justified. It is not so, however, in regard to the conduct of mankind towards their God.

Do not imagine, credulous as we are, that I affirm these facts upon the mere authority of a priest. I have been already too much a dupe to the falshoods of our *Cusipatas*, to credit the fables of that order of men.

The high rank, which they hold amongst all nations, encourages them to the practices of deceit; while their reputation is often founded only upon the blindness of ambitious people. It would cost them too much, to purchase by virtue the empire of the world: they would rather acquire it by deception.

LETTER XXVII.



TO KANHUISCAP.

IT is done, *Kanhuisap*: *Zulmira* expects me: I go to the altar. Thou seest me already there; but dost thou see the remorse that accompanies me? Dost thou see the altars trembling at the sight of a perjurer? the shade of *Zilia*, bloody, and indignant, enlightening these nuptials with a mournful torch? Dost thou hear her pitiful voice? “Is this,” she says, “is this, perfidious man, the faith which thou hadst plighted to me? Is this that love, which should even reanimate my ashes? Thou lovest me, thou sayest; and thou givest only thy hand

to

to *Zulmira*: Thou lovest me, perfidious man; and yet thou givest to another a boon, which I could never enjoy! Were I now living——” What furies, *Kanhuiscaap*, lacerate my breast! I see the deceived *Zulmira*, demanding from me a heart, to which she has a lawful right. My father and my people, sinking under a cruel yoke, will regret their deliverer in me. I see my promise at length——I hasten to fulfil it.

LETTER XXVIII.



TO KANHUISCAP.

ZILIA breathes. Where can I find a messenger, swift enough to bear to thee the transports of my joy? *Kanhuisap*, do thou, who hast shared my troubles, participate in the raptures of my soul. May the flames, with which it glows, fly and convey into thy breast the excess of my felicity!

The sea, our enemies, death—no, nothing has snatched from me the object of my love. She lives; she loves me! Conceive, if thou canst, my transports: Carried into a neighbouring country, into France, *Zilia* has experienced

rienced no misfortune, but that of our separation, and of the uncertainty of my lot. How do the Gods protect virtue! A generous Frenchman rescued her from the barbarity of the Spaniards.

Every thing was prepared for my marriage with *Zulmira*. I was going, oh Gods! when I heard that *Zilia* lived, and that I should soon behold her. No obstacle can keep her from me. Yes; I shall again behold her. Her lips will confirm the tender sentiments, which her hands have traced. Prostrate at her feet, I can ——— Oh, heaven! I tremble at the thought of that, which constitutes my only joy. My happiness confounds me. *Zilia* is coming into the midst of her enemies! New dangers ——— She shall not come. I fly to prevent her. What should detain me? *Alonzo*, *Zulmira*, the Gods, have dispensed with my vow. *Zilia* breathes. I receive her from the hands of virtue. In vain did gratitude, esteem, and friendship, urge her to return the passion of *Deterville*, her deliverer. She opposed to them our love, and forced them to respect our fires. Glorious conflict! amiable struggle!

Deterville stifles his passion. He nobly resigns his claims; and, to crown all, generously reunites us.

Zilia! Zilia! I hasten to enjoy my felicity. I fly to meet thee, to behold thee, to die with pleasure at thy feet.

LETTER XXIX.

— 000 —

TO KANHUISCAP.

THOU must blame *Zilia* only, my friend, for my silence. I have seen her: I have seen nothing but her. Do not expect me to describe to thee the joy, the raptures, which took possession of my soul the first moment I beheld her. To feel them, it were necessary to love *Zilia* as I do. Must torments, yet unknown, interrupt so pure a happiness?

There is no interval, alas! between the most ecstatic pleasures, and the most bitter pains. After so much felicity, a thousand torments rend my heart. My tenderness is loathsome

to

to me; and when I would fain forget my love, I am a victim to all its fury.

I, who could resign myself to the loss of *Zilia*, could not endure her presence. She ceased to love me!—Oh, distracting thought! When I appeared before her sight, love infused into my soul, with one hand, pleasure, with the other, grief.

In the first transports of a bliss, whose sweets I am incapable of expressing, *Zilia* stole from my arms to read a letter that was brought her by the young woman, who had conducted me to her. Distressed, agitated, overcome, the tears, which she had just given to joy, already flowed only for grief. She bathed the fatal letter with them. Her affliction alarmed me: I apprehended some misfortune. The grief, which I participated, was the triumph of my rival. *Deterville*, that deliverer, whom *Zilia* in her letters had so frequently extolled, had written this to her. It was dictated by the most lively passion. In withdrawing himself, after he had restored her to his rival, he confirmed, to the full, his unparalleled generosity, and
the

the grief of *Zilia*. She expressed herself in a manner, and in terms, very different from those of gratitude. She forced me to admire virtues, which, at that cruel moment, racked my soul. My affliction then borrowed the aid of a determined indifference. I immediately absented myself from *Zilia*. A prey to my despair, nothing can relieve me from it. Every reflection which I make is a pain to me: it robs me of my hope, my consolation. I have lost the heart of *Zilia*! that heart — the thought distracts me. My rival would be happy — Ah! it is too much to feel that he deserves it.

Hateful jealousy! thy cruel snakes have glided into my heart. A thousand fears — dark suspicions — *Zilia*, her virtues, her tenderness, her beauty, perhaps my injustice, all agitate, torment, destroy me. My grief is in vain concealed under an assumed tranquillity. Fain would I speak, complain, break out into reproaches — and lo! not a word escapes me. What can I say to *Zilia*? Can I upbraid her for inspiring *Deterville* with a passion, that is founded upon virtue? She does not share his
tenderness.

tenderness. But why be so lavish in his praise?
Why be for ever repeating his eulogy? —
Love, thou fountain of all my pleasures, shouldst
thou be that too of my troubles?

LETTER XXX.

TO KANHUISCAP.

WHERE am I, *Kanhuiscap*? By what torments am I haunted? My soul is inflamed with the most cruel fury. *Zilia*, pale and dejected, mourns the absence of my rival. *Deterville* triumphs in his absence. Oh, heaven! on whom shall my vengeance fall? He possesses her heart, *Kanhuiscap*; every thing confirms it. The barbarous *Zilia* attempts not to disguise her infidelity. Precious remains of innocence! Though conscious of her crime, she abhors dissimulation. I read her perjury in her

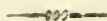
her eyes: Her lips even dare to avow it, by incessantly repeating the name I detest. Whither shall I fly? I am distracted in her company; and her absence is death to me.

When, beguiled by the sweetness of her looks, she diffuses over my soul a momentary calm, I fancy she loves me. That idea plunges me in an ecstasy, which confounds my reason. I collect myself; I long to speak to her: I begin; I stop suddenly; I cannot say a word. The sentiments, which alternately possess my heart, agitate and bewilder me. I cannot express myself. A fatal remembrance, *Deterville*, a sigh from *Zilia*, revive those transports, which I in vain would compose. The shades of night, even, cannot relieve me from their violence. If for a moment I close my eyes, and endeavour to suspend the anguish of my soul, the image of faithless *Zilia* tears me from my slumbers. I see *Deterville* at her feet; she listens to him with pleasure. Frightful sleep flies my eyelids. The light presents fresh troubles to my heart. A perpetual victim to the rage of jealousy, its fires have dried

dried even my tears. *Zilia, Zilia!* what evils result from so ardent a passion! I adore thee; I wrong thee. Oh, heavens! I love thee.

LETTER

LETTER XXXI.



TO KANHUISCAP.

ZILIA — love — *Deterville* — fatal jealousy! What confusion! A mist intercepts the names as I write them. *Kanhuisap*, I no longer know myself. In a paroxysm of the blackest jealousy, I armed myself with darts, with which I pierced the heart of *Zilia*. She wrote to *Deterville*: the letter was still in her hand. A fatal moment bewildered my reason. I formed the most base project — My promise, the religion I have embraced, every thing, I made subservient to my purpose. The most trifling pretexts appeared to me as the
strongest

strongest confirmations of my duty to abandon *Zilia*. I pronounced the barbarous sentence. Cruel adieus——What a moment! Could I do it?——Yes, *Kanhuisap*, I fled from *Zilia*. *Zilia* at my feet, her sobs, my own, ready to mingle with them——*Deterville*——frightful idea! Furious, I tore myself from her arms. But soon, in vain persisting, I would willingly return to her. Every thing conspires to oppose it: I dare not resist. Gods! what have I done! How distressing is shame! How bitter is repentance!

LETTER

LETTER XXXII.



TO KANHUISCAP.

CEASE to be surprised at my long silence. Could the cruel state of my heart permit me to apprise thee sooner of my lot? Think not, that, a prey to remorse, I still reproach myself with too just suspicions. It is *Zilia*, it is her faithless heart, and not mine, which they ought to devour. Yes, *Kanhuisap*, her sighs, her tears, and lamentations, were only the effects of shame; traces, which virtue, as she flies, still leaves in the heart. It is to efface them, that the cruel *Zilia* refuses again to see me. Her perseverance has driven me from her. Re-
tired

tired to a remote part of the same city, unknown to any one, and entirely devoted to my grief and my misfortunes, I endeavour to forget the ungrateful object I adore. Fruitless conflict! Love, in spite of us, steals into our hearts, and there cruelly, in spite of us, fixes his abode. In vain do I struggle to expel him. Jealousy cherishes him there; while all my efforts to banish jealousy are counteracted by love. The wretched sport of those two passions, my soul is divided between tenderness and rage. Sometimes I condemn my suspicions, and sometimes my love. Can I adore an ungrateful woman? Can I forget the object of my adoration? But whatever my affection may be, nothing can excuse her. O, that she had hated me! Hatred may be pardoned, but perfidy never can.

The tender anxiety, and friendship of *Alonso*, have discovered the retreat, where grief, and all the corroding ills of our nature, detain me. *Zulmira*, in a letter which I have just received from her, loads me with reproaches. I appear, in her sight, an ungrateful wretch,

wretch, whom neither my own word, nor her tears, can recal. I have only rescued her from the arms of death, to abandon her to more cruel torments. She will come, she says, into France, in order to manifest her resentment and my perfidy, to avenge her father and her love. Every word in her letter is a death-blow to my heart: I know too well the power of despair, not to dread its effects. *Zilia* is the unfortunate object of her fury. Bathed in *Zilia's* blood, would she present herself before me. Avenging Gods! is it then to guilt, that you commit the care of punishing it?

Stay, *Zulmira*; on my head spend all thy rage. Let the ungrateful woman preserve a life, of which remorse will be the chastisement. Thus mayest thou signalize thy vengeance. But, Oh heavens! *Zilia* in the arms of a rival! Wretched as I am, I shudder at the thought; I tremble for her, even at the moment, when she is ungratefully deceiving me. Detained by the ills that overwhelm me, my body is oppressed with weakness; while the perfidious *Zilia*, callous to every feeling
of

of shame, recalls my rival ——— Unfortunate
Aza! I am ——— I still live! What a curse
is existence to him, who breathes only to be
the sport of affliction!

LETTER XXXIII.



TO KANHUISCAP.

WHAT have I said? What horror surrounds me! Be assured of my shame, *Kanhuis-cap*, and (if possible) my remorse, before I apprize thee of my crime. Hateful to myself, I shall shortly appear so in thine eyes. Cease to pity my misfortunes: make them complete by your hatred.

Zilia is not guilty. The very idea wrongs her virtuous soul. Thou art not ignorant of my suspicions; their injustice will confirm to thee my wretchedness; a wretchedness, which I shall carry with me to the grave. Some unexpected

expected evil hourly befalls me. After the perfidiousness of *Zilia*, couldst thou have supposed; that heaven could abandon me to new torments? Couldst thou have believed, that her innocence, which ought to constitute all my happiness, should be the source of the most bitter troubles? To what infatuations was I a prey! What mists obscured my senses! That *Zilia* could have deceived me! that I could have been base enough to suspect it!—She will see me no more. My remembrance is odious to her. So tenderly as she loved me, how must I now be the object of her aversion! A victim to my horrible destiny, neither friendship; confidence, nothing can assuage my anguish. I communicate its bitterness to thy heart; and yet mine finds no relief.

Her fury appeased, *Zulmira* in vain assures me, that she offers it as a sacrifice to my peace and felicity: Secluded in a house of virgins, she consecrates to her God, and to my happiness, her life and the flower of her days.

Zulmira, generous *Zulmira*, canst thou forego thy vengeance? Ah! hadst thou a

cruel heart, how wouldst thou exult in the torments I endure !

It is then to myself alone, and the baseness of my sentiments, that I owe the evils which overwhelm me. Nothing was wanting to make me completely wretched, but to be myself the cause of my miseries : even that was inflicted on me. *Zilia* loved me ; I saw her ; every thing confirmed my happiness. Her tenderness, her feelings, my felicity, ought these to have been sacrificed to base suspicions ? Oh, horrible despair ! I fled from *Zilia*. It was I — Canst thou, my generous friend, canst thou conceive the state in which I am plunged ? Can I myself conceive it ? Remorse, love, despair, contend to devour my heart.

LETTER XXXIV.



TO ZILIA.

THE fear of offending thee still keeps in my trembling hands the knots which I form. Those knots, that were once thy consolation and thy pleasure, are now woven only by grief and despair.

Do not imagine, that I would conceal from thee my crime. Racked with compunction for suspecting thy fidelity, how should I dare to justify it? But have I not been already sufficiently punished? What remorse! the remorse of a lover who adores thee. Ah! thou wouldst hate me! Have I not merited thy contempt, rather than thy hatred?

Retrace for a moment all my misfortunes. Barbarous enemies tore thee from my love, just as my felicity was about to be consummated. Armed in thy defence, I was loaded with their ignominious chains. Carried to their country, the seas that bore me thither, for a while, it is true, supported all my hopes. I existed in them alone. My heart floated with thee. Thy ravishers, swallowed up by the waves, plunged me into the most cruel error. The impression of thy fate could not extinguish my tenderness. Grief is the food of love. I fain would have followed thee. I lived only to avenge thee. I tried every thing. I was about to sacrifice even my oaths, to give my hand (in spite of the remorse that haunted me) to a Spanish woman, in order to purchase, at that price, my liberty and my revenge; when, all at once, O unhopèd-for felicity! I was apprized that *Zilia* breathed, that *Zilia* loved me. O, too sweet remembrance! I fly to thee; I fly to happiness the most pure, the most lively — Vain hope! Cruel reverse! Scarce had I felt the transports, which thy presence excited in me, when a fatal poison, to which thy too vir-

tuons

tuous heart is a stranger, jealousy, crept into my soul. Its cruel serpents preyed upon my heart, that heart, which was formed only to love thee.

Gratitude, the most amiable of virtues, was the object of my suspicions. What thou wert indebted to *Deterville*, I fancied he had obtained; that thy virtue had been confounded with thy duty. I fancied ——— These were the fatal ideas, which interrupted the transports of our meeting. Thou couldst not, in the bosom of love, forget friendship: me it betrayed to forget virtue. Thy encomiums upon *Deterville*, his letter, the sentiments it expressed, the uneasiness it gave thee, the regret manifested by thee for the loss of thy deliverer, I ascribed all to the passion I then felt, and which I still feel ——— to love.

I concealed in my breast the fires that consumed it. What was the consequence? My suspicions of thy perfidy became immediately confirmed. I determined to revenge it. I would not employ reproaches; I thought thee unworthy of them. I do not hide from thee my crimes: truth is no less dear to me than my love.

I threatened to return to Spain, in order to fulfil a promise, from which my former engagements had absolved me. Repentance soon succeeded the frenzy, which had informed thee of my offence. I attempted in vain to undeceive thee as to a resolution, which love had destroyed the very moment I had formed it. Thy determination not to see me rekindled my fury. Abandoned again to jealousy, I withdrew at a distance from thee; but so far from going to Madrid to execute a crime that my heart abhorred (as thou, too credulous, wert persuaded to believe) sinking under the weight of my misfortunes, I sought in solitude, in an estrangement from society, that peace, which tranquillity of mind is alone capable of affording. Worn with affliction, my body was oppressed by the burden of my woes. A long time separated from thee, in spite of myself (shall I confess it, *Zilia*?) I had just strength enough left to upbraid thee. I saw thee, methought, rejoiced at my departure, recalling my rival. I saw thee — Alas! thou knowest my offence; but thou knowest not the punishment that attends it: it exceeds the crime.

Ah,

Ah, *Zilia!* could the greatness of my love efface it, I should be no longer guilty. Do not imagine, that I seek to move your pity; pity were too little for my tenderness. Give me, *Zilia*, give me back thy heart, or nothing. Listen to the voice of love, which ought still to plead in thy heart. Admit me in thy presence, that I may rekindle the flame, which thy just indignation endeavours to suppress. I shall be able to revive some spark in the embers of that love, which once glowed in thy breast.

Zilia! Zilia! determine my fate. I have confessed to thee my crime. If thy pardon does not efface it, my death shall be its punishment. Yet, grant me, too cruel *Zilia*, grant me at least the happiness of expiring at thy feet.

LETTER

LETTER XXXV.



TO KANHUISCAP.

○ THAT, while I strike thy senses with amazement, I could convey, *Kanhuisap*, into thy heart, the joy that possesses mine! O happiness! O transports! *Zilia* gives me her heart: she loves me. Frantic with ecstacy, I shed at her feet the most grateful tears. Her sighs, her looks, her transports, are the only interpreters of our love and our felicity.

Conceive, if thou canst, our happiness. That moment ever present to my eyes——that moment——No; no language can convey to thee so much tenderness, agitation, and delight.

Her

Her eyes, her animated countenance, expressed to me her love, her indignation, my shame——She turned pale. Faint and speechless, she sunk into my arms. But, like flames, excited by the winds, my heart, agitated by fear, burnt with greater violence. My lips, pressing her gentle bosom, imparted to her those fires, which restored her to life, and blended it with mine. She died, and instantly revived——*Zilia*, my dear *Zilia*! in what ecstasy dost thou plunge the happy *Aza*! No, *Kanhuisap*; thou canst not conceive our felicity. Come, and be a witness of it. Nothing should be wanting to complete my happiness. The Frenchman, who is the bearer of this letter, will conduct thee hither. Thou wilt see *Zilia*. My felicity hourly increases: The history of our happiness, as well as that of our misfortunes (far let them be banished from us) has reached the throne. The generous monarch of the French nation has given orders for the ships, which are going to oppose the Spaniards in our seas, to take us to Quito. We shall soon behold again our native country, those sad abodes, so dear to our hearts; those
abodes,

abodes, that gave birth to our early pleasures, to thy sighs and mine. May they witness, may they celebrate, may they, if possible, augment our felicity — But I hasten to *Zilia*.

Love, my friend, never made me forget friendship; but friendship detains me too long from love. Delicious transports that intoxicate my soul; it is in your paroxysms I breathe again — O happiness un hoped-for! O ecstasy inexpressible! *Zilia* is restored to me; she waits my coming; I fly into her arms.

FINIS.



